A DIVINE MESSAGE TO THE ELECT SOULE:

The Heads of these ensuing SERMONS contained in this BOOK.

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- *The use and benefit of Divine Meditation*
- *The danger of deferring Repentance.*
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DELIVERED

In eight Sermons upon seven severall Texts.

By that laborious and faithfull Messenger of CHRIST,

M^r. *William Fenner*, B.D. Somtimes Fellow of *Pembroke Hall* in *Cambridge*, and late Minister of *Rochford* in *Essex*.

The second *Edition*, corrected and Enlarged.

I have sent unto you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt; your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses, I have made the stink of the Camp to come up to your nostrils, yet have ye not returned to me, saith the Lord: therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet me thy God, O Israel. AMOS 4. 10. 12.

Printed at *London* by *T. R.* and *E. M.* for *John Stafford*, and are to be sold at his house in Brides Church-yard. 1647.

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Henry Wilkinson.

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Printed at Leadenhall by S. Z. and [illegible] for John [illegible]

THE EPISTLE TO the godly Reader of theſe pious Sermons.

THE Author of theſe enſuing Sermons, Maſter *William Fenner*, was ſo deſervedly famous in the Church of God, and ſo well knowne unto mee in particular, and one to whom I was ſo much obliged when he was living, as that I could not thinke it ſufficient to give a bare

Imprimatur unto his Sermons, but have added this *Testimony* also, that thereby all good people might be encouraged to read these Works of his, whose life and conversation was a continuall Sermon, and who spent himself in studying and preaching, and whose memory will be ever pretious unto

Your loving friend,

Edm. Calamy.

TO THE READER.

Good Reader,

THE *Author* of these Sermons, having served his time, and being fallen asleep, The lot is fallen upon me to appear in their behalf, and to seal unto their worth and usefulnesse for publike service, as far as thou pleasest to seal unto my judgement and faithfulnesse in such a case, with thine opinion and approbation. For the truth is, that the strength and value of my testimony concerning them, is like to extend no further, then thine doth concerning me: So that if I adde any thing to their credit and estimation in the world, by my recommendation, it is by the mediation of thine ingenuity and fairnesse towards me. But if thou shalt please to be at any reasonable cost in the reading of them, and lay thy judgement and conscience as close to the Spirit, as thou must thine eyes to the letter of what thou readest, I make no question but I shall be the gainer, and not they, by this engagement of my self for them.

True worth, especially when it overcomes, and breaks out of the cloud of obscurity, alwayes returns more then what it receives from any mans testimony: neither is there any method or trade so proper and certain, whereby to raise an estate of honour and reputation to a mans self, as the bestowing or casting honour and reputation upon others, so he be carefull and dexterous in the choice of his subject. *John Baptist* by giving testimony only to one, Jesus Christ, outgrew the common stature of those that are born of women, in true greatnesse, *Mat.* 11. 11, And yet there was little or nothing (in effect) added to Jesus Christ himself by his testimony, *Joh.* 5. 34. It is an ingenuous and inoffensive way to serve our selves out of other mens excellencies, by advancing them: neither do the generality of men in their practice, more generally consent upon any principle of reason & equity, then this, To recompence such men with terms of honour, who are unpartial and free in subscribing and acknowledging the worth and eminencie of others. And as many that are but of mean condition in the world otherwise, yet maintain themselves comfortably, by trimming and dressing the

gardens

gardens and orchards, and vineyards of rich and wealthy men: so may men that want other personal abilities and excellencies of their own, subsist upon terms of a convenient reputation, only by vindicating, adorning, and setting forth the endowments and gracefull parts of other men.

The subject or argument of these Sermons, is partly that noble and high-importing strain of Christian devotion; Preparation for that solemn enterview of Jesus Christ in his death, at his Table; The great severity of Gods proceedings against despisers of admonitions and reproof. Both theames of savoury consideration for all those that love not death; and more especially for those, who desire not only to be saved, but to be saved upon sweeter and more comfortable terms then as by *fire*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 15. Those that were chastened with weakness, and sickness, and death, amongst the Corinthians, 1 *Cor.* 11. 30. were yet saved, *ver.* 32. but this was as by or through fire: though they did not perish, were not consumed by the flames of Gods displeasure against them, yet they were sorely scorched with them, the smell of this fire was strong upon the garments of

their

their flesh: They discerned not the body of his Son Jesus Christ, in his ordinances; but in stead of that holy, reverend, and deep-studied behaviour which was due unto it, both from their inner and outward man, as being a creature of the highest and deepest sanctification that ever God sanctified; Sanctified not only to a more excellent and glorious condition, but also to many ends and purposes of far higher and deerer concernment, both for the glory of God, and benefit of Men themselves, then all other creatures whatsoever, whether in heaven or in earth: They handled and dealt by it in both kinds, as if it had been but a common or unsanctified thing; thus they discerned not the Lords body. And as they discerned not his body, so neither did God (in some sense) discern theirs; but in those sore strokes and heavy judgements which he inflicted on them, had them in no other regard or consideration, then as if they had been the bodies of his enemies, the bodies of wicked and sinful men; thus drawing the model and platform of their punishment (as usually he doth) from the structure and proportion of their sin. And if the moral or spiritual seeds and originals

of

of our outward and bodily afflictions, as ſickneſſes, weakneſſes, either upon our ſelves or ours, declining eſtates, loſſes, &c. (which ſtill lie deeper than the natural) were but carefully and narrowly ſought out, it is much to be feared we ſhould finde a great part of them (at leaſt) in the bowels of the ſame Sin ſo frequent amongſt us, I mean, of *Not diſcerning the* LORDS *Body*. The juſt and righteous God builds up the breaches that we make upon the honour belonging to the body of his Sonne, with the ruines of that honour which he had given unto ours in health, ſtrength, life, and many other outward comforts and ſupports. But thou wilt heare more of theſe things in the Sermous themſelves: the wholeſome Admonitions and Reproofs wherein contained, with the reſt of that heavenly proviſion for thy Soule, which thou ſhalt find here gathered together, and laid into thy hand, I heartily wiſh may be ſanctified unto thee by the higheſt hand of the Sanctifier; that ſo thy ſins and corruptions may flie ſeven wayes before that Spirit of power which here purſueth them, and thou never preſume to return back again unto them more. The God whom

we

we ſerve, is able to performe this great petition, by Jeſus Chriſt. To whoſe grace the peace of thy ſoule is faithfully and feelingly recommended by

That poor and unworthy ſervant

of Chriſt and his Church,

John Goodwin.

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THE

The Authors *Preface* upon these ensuing Sermons.

THE cause of that little heavenlines which is in the profession of Christianity, is *the want of Meditation*. Many can meditate *cursorily*, but that is not enough: it must be a *sticking* Meditation that must affect the heart. That place in 2 *Pet.* 2. 8. is marvellous pregnant, it was the means why *Lot* was so touched with the abominations of *Sodome*; *That righteous man dwelling amongst them, in seeing and hearing their ungodly deeds, vexed his righteous soul from day to day.* Many heard and saw too, besides *Lot*, and were not *vexed*. Why? Other matters stuck in their thoughts, they never throughly meditated on it; but he *vexed* himself, that is, the meditation of those evils, and bringing them home to his soul, vexed him. The word is a fit word, implying two things: First, the *searching and examining* of a thing, his meditating heart examined their sins; how *many* they were, *how grievous*, how *damnable*, how likely to pull down some vengeance or other upon them. Secondly, *the wracking or vexing upon trial*; so it was with *Lot*, he observed all their evils, and weighed them in his soul, & then he wracked his spirit with the consideration of them. The Evangelist useth this very word for *tossing*: this word that is here put for *vexing*, he puts for tossing of a ship in the seas, *Matt.* 14. 24. *The ship was tossed with the waves*: so meditation did *tosse* his soul with vexation, sometimes *down* to the deep: O miserable

wretches

wretches that we are! or, How brutish, how beastly, and how hellish are our sins? Sometimes up; O that the Lord would humble us and spare us! Sometimes over head and eares in the storme, O fool that I was to chuse my dwelling amongst such men! These meditations vexed his soul: Many have studied meditations, and yet are not acquainted with this *cordiall* meditation: Many Ministers that study Divinity all the day, that study the Word all the week, that study their Sermons all the year, may yet for all this, be *carnall* Ministers. Why? Because their meditation is but *inventing* and *mentall* meditation; *this* meditation is a *practicall* meditation, the thing meditated feeds the heart: *that* meditation is like a fluttering Pheasant that flutters before their eyes, it feeds their eyes indeed, but never feeds the stomack, as long as they neither catch nor eat it. The saving mysteries of God flutter before their eyes, and before their understandings, they feed their eyes with knowledge, but never feed their souls unto everlasting life, unlesse they fowle for it, dresse and digest it in their hearts. There is an apt word, *Gen.* 24.63. Isaac *went out to meditate in the field*: the originall hath it, to signifie *mutuall conference*, his mind conferred with the truth, and the truth with him, a mutuall working he wrought upon the truth, by meditating of it, and it wrought upon him; by leaving an impression upon his soul: this is a *rare* practice in the world, and yet as *necessary* as most, it is the art of the soul in being heavenly, it is the inuring of thee to every good duty: for by meditation a man comes to have his mind and heart fixed upon every thing that he would: Would he pray? he that hath inured his heart to meditate, his mind is fixed in his prayer. Would he receive the Sacrament? He that hath inured his heart by meditation, his mind is fixed in the Ordinance. *David* that was excellent at meditation, had a *fixed heart*, *Psal.*57.7. *Psal.*112.1.7.

THE

A SERMON OF The use and benefit of Divine Meditation.

HAGGAI. 1.5.

Now therfore saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your wayes.

THe Prophet reproveth the people because they could finde in their hearts to mind their own houses and yet were careless of the house of *the Lord*: the Lord had sent a drought and a famine, and sundry punishments upon them

them for *this* thing, and yet they laid it not to heart; and therefore he sends *Haggai* the Prophet unto them to call them to repentance; and (which is an admirable course, and little thought of in the world) he *begins* with holy meditation and consideration: *Now therefore thus saith the Lord, consider your wayes*; that is, both in regard of the *course* of them, your wicked wayes; and also in regard of the bitter *fruit* of them, your wretched and unprosperous wayes. Here be two things very remarkable according to the Text;

1. The *repetition* and inforcing of it again; for he urgeth it again, *Consider your wayes*, in the seventh verse.

2. The *benefit* that came by it; it brought them to repentance; for *they all obeyed the voyce of the Lord, and the words of the Prophet*, verse 12. So that the *Doctrine* from hence is this, that,

Doct. 1. *Serious meditation of our sins by the Word, is a speciall means to make men repent.*

Meditation is a *setled* exercise of the mind for a further inquiry of the truth, and so affecting the heart therewith; and therefore there bee *foure* things in meditation.

1. The first is an *exercise of the mind*, not barely closing with the truth, and assenting unto it, and seeing it, and there rests; but it looketh on *every* side of the truth: *I thought upon my wayes, and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies*, *Psal.* 119. 59. saith *David*; that is, I looked on my wayes on both sides, above and beneath; it's taken from curious

curious works, which are the same on both sides, so that they which work them, must often turne them on every side; used *Exod.* 38. 23. as being workes with *two faces*, as one well observes: so it was with *David*, I turned my wayes up-side downe, and looked every way upon them: thou never meditatest, unlesse thou look on thy wayes on both sides with all circumstances. An elegant phrase we have, *Dan.* 12. 4. *Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall abound, and be increased.* [*Run to and fro*] what is that? It is not the *bodily* removing of man from one place to another so much, as busie stirring of the *mind* from one truth to another, so that it seeth the whole selvedge and compasse of the truth: thou wilt never get the truth to be meditated of, till thou runne to and fro in it, meditate it on this side, and meditate it on that side, looke on it in every nook of it. Meditation is like perambulation when men go the bounds of the Parish, they goe in every part of it, and in every skirt of it: so meditation is the perambulation of the soule, when the soule lookes how far sinne goes, how far the flesh goes, how far the wrath of God against it goes.

Secondly, as it is an exercise, so it is a *setled* exercise, it is not a sudden flash of a mans conceit, but it *dwells* upon a truth. When a man is in a deep meditation upon a thing he neither sees nor hears, nor attends any thing else; the stream of the heart is setled upon the truth received; *The word of God abides in you, and you have over-* 2.

come the world, 1 *Iob.* 2.14. How came these *young men* to overcome Satan? Not by looking into the word, or onely thinking of the word; but by letting the Word *abide* in them. When a man hath been offered an injury, his heart is alwayes setled upon it; when he eates, his mind runnes on the injury; when he walkes, and talkes, still his mind runnes on the injury: so thy heart must goe on the truth 2 *Tim.* 3. *Continue in the things thou hast learned*: that is, take up thy mansion house in them. A wicked man may turn into the word sometimes to think of it; but it is as a man goes into another mans house: there is not his dwelling.

3. Thirdly it is to make a *further inquiry*: Meditation doth not onely settle upon the truth knowne; but it also would faine know *more* of those truths, that are subjected to it; as a man without may see the out side of the house, but he cannot see the roomes within, unlesse hee come nigh, and draw the latch, and come into the house, and goe into the roomes, and look about them. Meditation pulls the latch of the truth, and lookes into every closet, and every cubboard, and every angle of it. Here is my sin here is my uncleanesse, and here is Gods anger, here is the wofull evill that will follow upon it, and here is a remedy against it. Meditation searches into all the lofts and closets of the truth. *The entrance of thy word giveth understanding unto the simple*, Psal. 119. 30. The ingresse (as one expounds it) or going into thy word, gives understanding;

ſtanding; the wicked ſtand looking upon the truth without the doores, but it is the ingreſſe, or *going into the truth*, that gives underſtanding. Indeede the truth is like a neat palace, (ſaith *Chryſoſtome*) the Spirit of God is like the light of the Sunne that ſhineth into it; the wicked they ſtand without, like fooles peeping in at the windowes, and there bee many thouſands of pearles that are not manifeſt unto them: The houſe ſeems dark to them that ſtand without. Thou muſt enter into the word, and into every particular truth in it, and goe up ſtaires, and down ſtaires, and have an eye into every roome. There thou ſhalt find humility, there contrition, there converſion, there Chriſt and his Spirit in one cloſet, there all his Jewels in that, and that box; all is manifeſt within doores.

Fourthly, it labours *to affect the heart*; it doth not onely labour to know more and more of the truth, but alſo it labours to bring it home to the heart. *The good woman conſiders a field and buyes it. Prov.* 31. 16. that is, (ſaith *Ambroſe*) the good Chriſtian ſoule, if in civilitie, then much more in Divinity, conſiders the truth and buyes it, he taketh it for his own, and appropriates it unto himſelfe; *Lo this (ſaith Eliphas) wee have ſearched out: ſo it is, heare it, and know it for thy ſelfe, Job* 5. 27. When thou canſt ſay of the truth loe this it is, we have ſearched it out; I have dived into it, peruſed it, ſo it is, even ſo indeed; all this is, that thou mayeſt apply it unto thy ſelfe, and *know it for thy good.* 4.

Reas. 1. The first Reason is, because *meditation musters up all weapons, and gathers all forces of arguments for to presse the same*, and lay them heavie upon the heart: This usurie is spirituall and good, when meditation, like usurers, who grinde and suck the bloud of the needy, and are not content with their principall, but will have consideration for every pound they lay out; yea for every shilling, and that for every week and every month, and every quarter, and every yeare: the poore man could bee content to pay the principall; but to exact use upon use, this kills him; so meditation *exacteth* upon the soul and holdeth it to use upon use. *You have committed evill in a corner, but you shall not carry it so.* Item, *it was against the knowledge of God revealed*; Item, *against many mercies received*; Item, *against many judgements threatned, against many checks of conscience, against many vows and promises*; remember that, O my soul. Item, *for that, and* Item *for this*; Item *for every lust, and every circumstance, thus oft, and in this place, and at that time, in that manner.* So meditated the prodigall. Looke as it is in warres; were there LuKe 15. 17. but many scores come against an Army, they might be conquered; or many hundreds, they might be resisted; but if many thousands should come against a small army, it would be in danger indeed. Meditation leavieth a *whole Army* of arguments, a whole Army of curses, miseries, judgements, commandements against the soul: how ever one misery or plague will not knock it

it down, but the ſoule may brook it, and goe away with it: but meditation brings a great *Armado* of arguments, and tells the ſoule God is againſt thee, and againſt thy wayes: God is againſt thee where ever thou art, or what ever thou doeſt. Then the heart begins to cry out, as *Eliſha his* ſervant did, *Maſter, what ſhall wee doe?* 2 *Kings* 6. 15. So many horſes againſt us, ſo many charets, and ſo many men againſt us? Maſter, what ſhall we doe? ſo many ſinnes, and ſo heynous, ſo many judgements and ſo heavie, and ſo many evils and ſpirituall maladies! Oh, what ſhall I doe to be ſaved! that I ſhould commit ſinne againſt a God that hath damned innumerable Angels, millions of Kings, Princes, and Nobles! that I ſhould commit it againſt this God, ſo mercifull to me, ſo gracious, ſo patient, ſo good to my ſoule! that I, wretched rebell, ſhould for a *cup* of drink refuſe heaven! for a luſt not worth a ſtraw under my foot, caſt off Chriſt, and grace and all! how ſhall I doe? Then the ſoule ſtands in a maze.

Reaſ. 2. The ſecond Reaſon is, becauſe *meditation* having bundled up all Items againſt the ſoule, and brought in all bills of account, *it faſtens ſin upon the ſoule*, I meane it makes the ſoule feele it, ſo that it muſt needs be convinced without any evaſion. Meditation deals with a man as *Eliſha* dealt with the meſſengers of King *Joram*; the murderer he was comming to doe miſcheife to the Prophet, and the Prophet did ſhut the door, and held him faſt at the door, 2 Kings 6. 32. and

then he made him know that the evill was from the Lord, before he could stirre: so meditation, when the soule would fain out of doores into its old course againe, it shuts the doore upon it, and holds it fast: Meditation tells the soule, this evill is from the Lord upon thee, O my soule, if thou stirre in or out upon this or that lust any more, this evill that curse, that vengeance and damnation; if ever thou stirre forth, thou loset thy mercy, thou loset Christ, thou loset all possibility of comfort. Stirre not out; if thou dost, thou wilt rue it. Sometimes when men heare the Word, they go away touched, they resolve not to commit sinne again as they have done; yet when they are gone, it works not, but the heart recoyles again, and turnes to its old passe. The Reason is, because they meditate not upon the Word, they fasten it not upon their consciences.

It is with the Word as it is with a *salve*: if a man that hath never so good a salve that will heal any thing in foure and twenty houres, if a man should do nothing but lay it to the wound, and take it off, lay it on and take it off, it will not heale the wound: and no marvell. Why? hee will not let it *lie on*, the best salve will not heal the soare nor eate out the corruption, unlesse it be bound on and let lie: so it is with the *Word*, many a soule heares it; *heart*, *conscience*, *affections*, all *toucht*: but when he is gone out of the Church, all is gone, his affections die, his heart dies, and his conscience becomes unfruitfull.

full. Why? he is *still removing* of the salve, and will not let it lie on, and therefore the Word over-powers not his corruptions; the *Word* is like the salve; *conviction of conscience* is like the laying on of the salve; *meditation* the binding of it to the soare.

St *James* compares a slight hearer to a man that *looks into a glasse*, who soon *forgets* his visage; but a good hearer doth two things: First, hee *stoops down and looks into it*, to take a perfect view of his estate; Secondly, he *continues looking into it*, *James* 1. 25. he doth not leave the glasse behind him, but he carrieth away the glasse with him: *This man shall be blessed in his deed.*

If the pills be never so bitter, yet let a man *swallow* them speedily, there is no great distaste; but if a man chew a pill, it will make him deadly sick. Thy sinnes are like those pills, they go down very pleasingly, because thou swalloweſt them: thou swalloweſt down thine oathes, lies, ignorance, pride, thou swalloweſt downe the threats of the Lord; but if thou wouldeſt *chew* these bitter pills, and *meditate* and ruminate, and chew the cud, drunkennesse would be as bitter as hell; swearing, and security, and Sabbath-breaking, would be as bitter as wormwood; thou durst not go on in them, they would make thee look sourly upon them for ever: like a man that hath chewed a pill, he can hardly ever see a pill, but his stomach riseth against it. *Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns*, *Hosea* 2. 6. I will not be so *precise* (saith the heart) I will

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goe on as I have done, I will goe after these and these courses; *I will hedge up thy way with thorns* (saith God;) meditation is Gods instrument, and sets a *thorne* in the way to every sinne, to bring the heart backe again. Would the heart lash out into luke-warmnesse? Meditation sets a thorn in the way; *God will spue thee out of his mouth:* Would the heart sally forth into any sinne? Meditation sets a thorn in the way, *Cursed art thou if thou dost erre from Gods Commandements.* The heart cannot step forth into any lust; but meditation meets it with a thorn, this curse, and that curse, this plague, and that Plague: Would the heart reach at mercy in its sinne? Meditation pricks it from it; mercie is vengeance unto thee, so long as thou hankrest after sinne. Would the heart reach after Christ in his sinne? Meditation pushes it backe with a thorn: No Christ for thee, but a severe judge, so long as thou itchest after thy vanities.

Use 1. What shall wee think of them then, which are loth to *practise* this dutie? Most men are loth, though they be willing enough to meditate on their worldly affaires. The Mariner meditates and considers his *course* by his *Compasse*, or else hee might soon runne on the quick-sands; a Pilgrime is full of thoughts, what? *am I in my right way?* He never comes to a *doubtfull* turning, but he stands in a study & muses, O which is my right way? The Merchant meditates, and his minde runnes on his *Count-book*, or else he is soone *bankrupt*: The voluptuous man, his thoughts run

run on his pleasures: the drunkards on his cups, the proud mans on his credit. But it is one thing to looke to that which is thine, and another thing to looke to thy selfe, *Take heed to your selves* saith the Lord, *Deut.* 11. 16. *Deut.* 12. 30. *Deut.* 4. 9. *Exod.* 34. 12. as if he should say, think on thy selfe and of thy poor soul; let thy meditation run on thy poore soule. The heart is untoward unto this duty, and as unwilling as a Bear to be brought to the stake: the Beare would rather be rambling abroad then be baited: so men had rather let their hearts ramble about any thing, then bait them for their sinnes: yea men scoffe at it, saying, shall we alwayes be poring on our sins? shall wee run mad? shall we drive our selves to despaire? cannot men keep themselves well while they are well?

The poore man he hath no time for this tedious duty: the rich man, he needs it not, the wicked they dare not; so no man will: *No man repented him of his wickednesse, saying, What have I done?* Ier. 8. 6. No man would meditate and thinke with himselfe, what is my case? how stands my condition before God? what evill have I done? In the Ark, and in the old law, if there were any beast that *chewed not the cud*, it was a signe of an *unclean* beast: the word implies the bringing up of their meat into their mouthes again, and sitting downe to chew it again. But now men like unclean beasts, swallow downe the food of their soules unchewed, and will not meditate thereof, that it may turne

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to good nutriment; but like Cormorants, they take it downe by whole-sale, and are never the better. So the Word is to them as the Quailes to the Israelites, while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against them, and smote them with a very great plague, *Num.* 11. 33. so the Word of God sticks in their teeth; ere they chew it, or meditate upon it, the wrath of God fals upon them, and strikes them with a very great plague of hardnesse of heart, and leannesse of soule. But the truth is, you that will not now see your sinnes, nor meditate on them, you shall see them, and meditate on nothing but on feare. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see, but they shall see and be ashamed,* Esay 26. 11.

Let. 1. Now the *Lets* of serious meditation are, First, *vain company.* When *Peter* saw the people touched, *Acts* 2. 37. he said unto them, *Save your selves from this untoward generation, vers.* 40. as if he should say, If you love your selves, God hath touched your hearts, suffer not Satan and these wicked instruments, to steale away these impressions of terror from your soules. If ever you love your soules, sort not your selves with this untoward generation. See as it humbles you, so let meditation follow upon it, so that it may *still* humble you. Ill company brings a man to the gallowes (as the proverb is) and ill company will bring a man to hell (say I:) and meditation cannot be admitted to it. *David* would not have

a wicked man to abide in his ſight, when he was to meditate: he wiſht that there were never a wicked man in the world; much leſſe would he keep company with them. *My meditation of him ſhall be ſweet; let the ſinners be conſumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more: Bleſſe thou the Lord, O my ſoul, Pſal.* 104.35.

The ſecond Let is, *multitude of worldly buſineſſe.* *A dreame* (ſaith *Solomon*) *comes through multitude of buſineſſe, Eccleſ.*5. Multitude of buſineſſe cauſeth the mind ſo to run on them, that they do even dream of them in their ſleep, as *Lucretius, Seneca, Claudian*, and many others of the heathens have obſerved. He that over-imployes himſelf, his meditations of heaven are dreaming meditations, his thoughts dreaming thoughts, he can never ſeriouſly meditate on the good of his ſoul. Many ingroſſe buſineſſe into their hands, never thinking they have enough; they are ſo greedy after the world, and ſo careleſſe of heaven. So they make their hearts like high-way ground: the word ſown in their hearts is like ſeed ſown in the high-way, where is ſuch a through-fare, and a broad Carriers road of earthly affairs, that all the word and meditation thereof is troden down as the graſs in the high-way, which cannot grow; ſo neither meditation in a buſie-bodied heart. For a good meditating mind, (*Nemo ad illam pervenit occupatus*, ſaith *Seneca*) no man ever came to it ſurfeited with imployments. *David* although he had abundance of State affairs, both his hands full, yet he would not have his hands

Let. 2.

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to be over-charged, but that he might meditate in Gods word: *My hands also* (not all downe to businesse onely in the world, but also up to thy Law) *will I lift up to thy commandements which I have loved, and I will meditate on thy statutes, Psal.* 119. 48. Take not too much upon thee, like those grasping worldlings, that wil have a finger in a hundred things: *Martha, Martha, thou art cumbred about many things, but one thing is needfull, and Mary hath chosen the better part, Luk.* 10. 41. and what was that *one thing? Mary was* sitting and meditating in, and pondering Christs words, not (*as Theophylact* expounds it) as if he would say, *Martha, Martha*, thou art cumbred about many dishes, but one thing is needfull, only one dish; though indeed so it be, yet he here speaks not only of one dish, but of many cares which hinder that one necessary dutie of hearing and meditating on the word of God.

3. Thirdly, *ignorance*. A man cannot meditate of a thing he knowes not; nor thou of thy sinnes, if thou be not skilfull in Gods catalogue of thy sinnes; nor of mercies and promises if thou beest not verst in them; nor of his Precepts, if thou be not expert in them. The *Psalmist* proveth that he had more knowledge then all his Teachers: Why? Because he used to meditate. *I have more understanding then all my Tutors, for thy testimonies are my meditation, Psal.* 119. 99.

4. Fourthly, *aversion of the heart*: The heart is like the swine, meditation is like the yoke: the Hogge would fain get into forbidden fields for

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to grub them, the *yoke*, that hinders him; but he cannot abide it; every step he takes, he lifts up his foot to strike it off if he could; so the heart would faine break through hedges, and get into forbidden wayes, and if thou wouldest meditate, it would every moment lift up its heele to put thee besides it: If it cannot put thee besids it, it will marre it if it can; and therefore *David* praid to God to settle his heart upon the right, and put his yoke upon him, or it would never be stedfast else upon meditation. *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, bee ever acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer, Psal.* 19. 14.

1. This *overseene of the heart consists in* three things: First, in *the carelessnesse of the heart*, the heart prizeth not meditation, nor the things of grace that are to be meditated on; it will not be at the cost and charge, nor at the paines for them. *A wise end is a price in the hands of a foole, seeing there is no heart to get wisedome? Prov.* 17. 16. The heart will not be brought to Gods price; it would faine have the wares at a cheap rate.

2. Secondly, *in the runnings of it*; the heart is like a vagrant rogue, he would rather be hanged then tied to his parish. Thou canst not bring it to prayer, but it will bee a gadding on by-thoughts: thou canst not bring it to a Sermon, but it will be roving after wandring imaginations: thou canst not bring it to a meditation, but it will bee a gossiping forth. When Christ came

to

to bind men with his blessed cords, and bind their hearts to him, *Psal.* 2. they fall a meditating afterwards, but it was meditating and imagining vain things, *verse* 1. and when they saw they were to be tied up, *Tush* (say they) *let us break their bonds a sunder, and cast their cords from us, verse* 3. What, do Ministers call us to such strictnesse, thinking to imprison our hearts in their stocks? away with their bonds, no we will have none of it.

3. Thirdly, in *the wearisomnesse of the heart.* It is as weary of meditation as a Cur is of the whip, and the chain; Oh how it barkes and maunders, till it be loose! yea, though it be never so eager upon it at the first, it's jaded presently. When God called the Jews to sanctifie his Name, they thought in their hearts, *O what a wearinesse is this! and yet have snuffed at it, (saith the Lord) ye brought that which was lame, and torn and sicke, Malac.* 1. 13. What a wearinesse is it to meditate? saith the heart; it snuffs, it is untoward, it is lumpish; it would fain reare off a peice of the duty, or bring it waiting a legge, or without soundensse and sincerity; yet some of them (saith *Calvin*) were so humbled, that they *thought on the Name of the Lord, Malac.* 3. 16. they thought, and meditated, and forced their hearts to consider throughly.

Use 2. This may serve for *terror* unto all those, who for all this that hath been spoken, dare sit down without it; yea, the world will not believe

these

theſe things, nor meditate therein: yea, they blame Gods meſſengers, that call ſo ſore upon them. *Habukkuk* was ſo ſerved; he preached the mercies of God to the humble, and the judgements of God to the wicked: they ask him why he was ſo mad? well (ſayes the prophet) *I will ſtand upon my watch, and ſee what the Lord ſayes unto me, that I may anſwer to them that reprove me.* *Hab.* 2. 1. What did the Lord tell him? *Write the viſion, and make it p'aine upon Tables that he may run that reads it, verſ.* 2. Will they not beeve? Will they rove? Will they not meditate ſteadily upon theſe things? Will they not ſet their hearts ſtay and meditate and conſider? The viſion ſhall be ſo plain, that he that runnes may read it. If thou wilt not ſtay, and meditate therein, the Word is ſo plain to thy condemnation, that if thou didſt but think of it with a running thought, thou maiſt read thine owne vengeance, thine owne woes, in regard of the multitude of them. He that runnes by a way full of holes and pits, though he ſtand not meditating where are the pits, yet he may run and ſee them. The book of God is full, leaves and cover, and all, of woes againſt thee; *Lam.* 2. 10, It is written without, there thou maiſt read thy ſins written; it is written likewiſe within, there thou maiſt read thy plagues.

Secondly, in regard of the greatneſſe of them, he that runnes along and ſee a great towne on fire, though he ſtay not to meditate on it, what or where it is, yet he may runne and read it: ſo is

the curse of sinners a great curse, *Zeph.* 1. 10. he that runnes may read it.

Thirdly, in regard of the proximitie and neerenesse of them Hee that runnes, if a sword come out by his throat, though he doe not stop to meditate, what is this at my throat, yet he cannot but see it. *Behold the Judge standeth before the doore.* Jam. 5. 9. Take heed how thou grudgest, or sinnest in any particular; behold the Judge standeth before the doore; behold it and meditate on it with thy heart; if not, he is nigh enough, thou canst not step out of doores unto any sinne, but though thou runnest, thou must needs see the Judge that wil Judge thee, Iteming thy sinnes, noting thy wayes, observing thy courses, ready to unhaspe the doore on thee, to hale thee unto hell in thy sinnes. *Whose end is destruction.* Whose? Even those that *mind earthly things. Phil.* 3. 19. If thy mind and meditation run more on thy ground, cattell, goods, kitchin, house bnsines, earthly talk, discourses, thoughts, more then of heaven, thy end is destruction. If thy thoughts will not stay here, doe but runne, and thou maist read it; *Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets, I am come to fulfill them, Mat.* 5. 17. Some (saith *Chrysostome*) might think now Christ is come, it is no matter though wee bee not so strict, Christ is enough: Think not thus (saith Christ) but rather thinke and meditate that I am come to fulfill it my selfe, and to see it fulfilled in those I mean to save, so as to make it the rule of their lives. *Themistocles* said,

said, he could not sleep in his bed for continuall thinking and meditating on *Miltiades* his Triumphs: And how canst thou sleep in thy bed, if thou wouldest but meditate on these places of Scripture? Retire thy self apart, there is no casting up of a mans account in a crowd: Let mee alone, I am busie; so we use to say, when wee would be private.

Thou must do with thy soul as *Ehud* did to *Eglon*, who said, *I have a secret errant to thee, O King*, and so all went out, and he said *I have a message from God to thee*, & so *stabd him* at his heart, *Judg.* 3.19. So (for *Ehud* was a type of Christ, saith *Lavator*) I have a secret errant to thee, O my soul: and so let all go forth: I have a message from God to thee, a message of wrath for thy Pride, a message of wrath for thy vain hopes: Thus, saith the Lord; Cursed art thou, O my soul, stab it to the heart with this spirituall Dagger, wound it with the blade and haft and all, till thou have let out the fat and the dirt, the filth and iniquity all out. The Prophet speaking of mens looking on Christ whom they have *pierced*, this meditating and laying to heart that they have crucified the Lord Jesus, saith that *they shall mourne every one in private, the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the house of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; every family apart, and their wives apart, Zach.* 12. 2. *Means* 1.

The second means, if thou wouldest meditate aright, observe the times of privacie. *Means* 2.

1. First, the morning, that is the best time for study: *David* chose the morning for meditation, *Psal.* 5. 1. 3. Let them heare this (saith *Chrysostome*) that rise betimes in the morning to serve their Hogges and their Dogges, their bellies and their backes,, before they serve God in meditation or prayer, unlesse it be the mumbling and roting a few [*Lord have mercy upon us*] that pray not till after many other businesses, it may be not then neither. *David* prayed and meditated in the morning. In the morning thou washest thy face and thy hands, but thy soul hath more need, which thou washest not: in the morning thou putteſt thy cloathes on thy body: but thou putteſt not on afresh the new man upon thy soule; in the morning thou shakest off sleepinesse from thine eyes, but thou shakest not off drowsinesse from thy soule. Thou lookest into the glasse in the morning, to see if thy face be as it should be; but thy soule is not composedly looking into the glasse of Gods word. In the morning look up in prayer, look up in thankſgiving, look up in meditation.

2. Secondly, the night too; *O Lord, I meditate on thee in the night watches Pſ.* 63. not as carnal ones do, when they cannot sleepe, then their mind runnes on their Cow and their Calfe, their markets and vanities, this neighbour and that neighbour; like *Petronius* his dogge, that was hunting while he lay asleepe in his kennell.

3. Thirdly, *in the evening; I prevent the night watches, that I might meditate, Pſal.* 119. 148. he did

did not as wicked men doe, ſleepe like a horſe in the ſtable on his litter, with his neck tied to the manger; they goe to bed with their hearts roped to the world, worldly thoughts, this thought and that thought, and God knowes what.

Fourthly, *when the heart is touched* at a Sermon, or Sacrament, or obſerving of any judgement or mercy, or act of Gods providence, it is beſt ſtriking when the Iron is hot. *David* when his heart was touched at the reproaches of the wicked, then he *meditated*, *Pſ.* 119. 23. When the inſtrument is in tune, then it is good playing upon it; when a Churle is in a good mood, then it is fitteſt to deale with him. Oft will thy heart be out of tune, oft churliſh and in an ill mood: if thou letteſt the good opportunity go, thou knowſt not when thou ſhalt have ſuch another. When the fiſh is nibbling at the bait, then it is good twitching at the angle rod; when the heart is a nibbling at grace, then give a pluck at it by meditation. See *Act*, 17. 11. now while the tide laſts, ſee thou maiſt get into the haven. 4.

Thirdly, *rub up thy ſelfe and thy memory*; call as much to mind as thou canſt, what evill thou haſt done ever ſince thou waſt borne, what in the womb, what in thy cradle, childhood, youth, age; what a ſervant, what a Maſter; what as a ſervant, what as a ſonne, what as a neighbour, what as an inferiour, what as a ſuperiour; either in thought, or word, or deed; how often thou haſt omitted good duties, or done them by halves; Item for this, and Item for that. They *Means* 3.

shall *remember themselves, and turne unto the Lord, Psal.* 22. 27. First they shall *remember themselves*, and say, What have I done, O wretch! how carelesly have I lived! Secondly, so meditating, they shall *turn unto the Lord.* Many say, Oh! they cannot remember their sinnes. They lie in a thousand particulars; for they can remember to commit them wel enough. See *Lam.* 3. 19, 20. 21. our Greek translation turnes it, *I spake to my self, and meditated:* as if they should say, O what a rebell have I been! how unthankfull, how unprofitable under all the means of grace! I may thank my sins for all the plague of the Almighty that are upon me: if he had damned me, I had been well served. What followes? *The heart bowed, and was humbled*, as it is in the text.

Means 4. The fourth means. Rouze up thy heart. As it is with the eye of the body, so it is with the eye of the soul: when a man would look *wishly* upon a thing, as if he would look through it, he sets his eyes on it, as *Paul* set his eyes on *Elymas, Ah thou child of the Devil, thou, &c. Acts* 13. 9. Meditation is the setting of the eye of the soul upon a thing: set thine eye upon thy selfe, and say, Ah thou child of the wicked, why hath Satan filled thy heart! O wretched heart! whence hadst thou thy self-love? hadst thou not it from the Devil? God might do well to send thee to the Devill, if thou lovest so to bee his Broker. Set thine eyes stedfastly upon thine owne wayes and thou shalt see infinite hellish evils in thy sins.

The

The third use is for *reprehension.* What is more usuall then this, that men make *sleight* account of their sins? Nay, when God tells them in their hearts. Thou shalt not do this, thou shalt not doe that; yet they meditate and think, Why may I not? *Samuel* bid *Saul* stay for directions from him, before he sacrificed unto God. It seemes that God spake to his heart, Stay till *Samuel* comes to direct thee: yet *Saul forced himselfe* to disobey, and to doe sacrifice, 1. *Sam.* 13. 12. he was bold, as *Vatable* turnes it; hee *confirmed himselfe*, as *Pagnin* translates it: hee thrust himselfe upon the doing of it; God forbad him, he would doe it: God urged him in his conscience not to doe it, yet he would doe it: God again whispered to him to doe it not, yet hee forced himselfe to doe it; as if he should say, I hope I may doe it, I have stayed seven dayes wanting an houre, or a piece of an houre; and a little piece breakes no squares. No? God rejected *Saul* for that venture; God would have forced him by meditation, O no, doe it not, by no meanes: he made him think, Oh, it is against Gods commandements, I may not doe it. No, but nevertheless he forced himselfe to doe it. Thus God deals with thousands and millions in the world: Be not a drunkard; God flings the meditation into the conscience yet a drunkard thou wilt be: be not a drunkard again; a drunkard notwithstanding thou wilt be: Be not again; they force themselves, they will goe to the Ale-house. And so of all other sinnes. If men will cast off this work *Vse* 3.

of meditation darted into their ſoules, they caſt off their owne mercy. God tells them, pray not, hear not, offer not, without directions from me; they dread not the commandement, they will: I truſt prayers are good, I will ſay them. Thus they will not meditate, or if they doe, they break it off before it comes to any ſtrength or perfection: yea, Gods owne ſervants, that deſire to look towards *Sion*, is not this your complaint oft? I cannot find ſinne heavie: I confeſſe the word diſcovers it to me, but I cannot be troubled for it. Look as it is with men in the world, if five hundred pounds weight bee laid upon the ground, if a man never pluck at it, he ſhall never feele the weight of it. Your ſinnes are not many hundreds, but many thouſands, yea many ten thouſands: ſelfe-love, ſecurity, hardneſſe of heart, baſe fears, &c. it is impoſſible to reckon them. The leaſt vain thought that ever you imagined, the leaſt vain word that ever you uttered, were weight enough to preſſe your ſoules down to hell. Therefore what are ſo many ſins, and ſo great, and ſo often committed? What are they? they are as heavie as rocks and mountains; yet ye feele them not ſo heavie. Why? Ye weigh them not; if ye did, yee ſhould finde them heavier then the ſand, as *David* did when *his ſinne was ever before him* (*Pſal*, 51. 3.) that is his ſinne was ever in his thoughts, and in his meditation, his ſinne was ever like a huge Milſtone before him, and he was ever tugging and pulling to remove it out of his way.

I,

I, but you will ſay, How ſhall I come to feele my burden? *Object.*

I anſwer, three things are here to be diſcovered. *Anſw.*

Firſt, the *ground upon which our meditation muſt be raiſed.*

Secondly, *the manner how to follow it home to the heart.*

Thirdly, *how to put life and power in it.*

The *ground* I referre to theſe *foure* heads: 1.
Firſt, *meditate on the goodneſſe, patience, and mercy of God,* that hath been abuſed by any of your ſins: the greater they have been to you, the greater is every ſinne: this maketh them out of meaſure ſinfull, becauſe God is out of meaſure mercifull. There are many ſinnes in one, when a man ſinnes againſt many mercies. See *Iudg.* 2. 2, 3. *Why have ye done thus?* I have done thus and thus *mercifully* unto you, why have yee done thus *unthankefully* to me? Why was my mercy abuſed? Why was my goodneſſe ſleighted? Why was my patience deſpiſed? as if the Lord ſhould ſay, I ſpeak to your owne conſciences, think of it, meditate of it, why have yee done this? Doe ye thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh people and unwiſe? Is not he thy Father? Meditate of it firſt, and tell me then. For it is a queſtion put to thy meditation to anſwer. Do yee thus requite the Lord ye fooliſh people? Wert thou ever in want, but God ſupplied thee? Wert thou ever in weakneſſe, but God ſtrengthened thee? Wert thou ever in ſtraits, but God delivered

delivered thee? When thou wert in ſickneſſe he cured thee when thou wert in poverty, who relieved thee? when thou wert in miſery, who ſuccoured thee? Hath not God been a gracious God to thee? Every ſoule can tell, never poor ſinner hath had a more gracious God, then I poore ſinner have found to my ſoule. All my bones can ſay, Lord, who hath been like unto thee? This heart hath been heavie, and thou haſt cheered it: this ſoul hath been diſtreſſed, & thou haſt eaſed it: many troubles have befallen me, and thou haſt given me a gracious iſſue. *This poore man* (ſaith *David*, pointing to himſelfe) this poore man *cried, and the Lord heard him*, Pſa. 34. 6. And ſhall I thus reward the Lord? ſhall I ſinne againſt this goodneſſe? Then what ſhall I ſay? Heare. O heavens, and hearken, O earth; Sunne, ſtand thou ſtill, and thou Moon bee amazed at this, and be avenged on ſuch a heart as this. *The Oxe knowes his Owner, and the Aſſe his Maſters Crib*; but here is a heart that will not remember to know the Lord. Heare, O heavens, this villany crieth ſo loud, that your eares may heare it. Heare all yee Angels, and be aſtoniſhed, here is villany to make your eares glow: yea, hear Hell, hear Devils, if ever there were worſe committed by you. When men are but *ingenuous*, if they have received any kindneſſe from a friend, they were never in want but hee relieved them: never harbourleſſe, but he houſed them; never to ſeek, but he found them: Let a man deale thus kindly with a man, if this man ſhould deny

deny him any ordinary favour, he will be ashamed of himselfe, ashamed to come into his presence. What will he think, his house was mine, his cubboard was mine, and his purse was mine, and his friends were mine, and that I should deale thus unkindly with him, even *nature* rebukes me. This serious meditation will help to breake thy heart.

The second ground of meditation is to *meditate on the justice of God*: God is a just God as well as mercifull. Speak all yee Devils in hell, Doe yee not feele that he is a just God? Speake Sodome, Speake Gomorrah, your fire and brimstone can testifie that he is a just God: Speak *Admah*, *Zillah*, and all yee that were drowned in the old world, your deluge can testifie he is a just God, *His judgements are in all the world.* 1 *Chron.* 16. 14. What is become of drunken *Nabal*, *and* swearing *Saul*, and covetous *Ahab*, and proud *Iesabel*, and mocking *Iehu*, and envious *Shimei*? What is become of all blind Jebusites, and prating cavilling *Diotrepheses*? Justice hath taken hold of them. What is poverty? What is nakednesse? What is famine, sickneſſe, the gout the stone, Feaver, plague? These are the *little* arrowes of Gods justice. What is shame, disgrace, crosses, afflictions, unseasonable raines, dangerous weather, warres, rumours of warres? What are all the evils under the Sunne? They are the little finger of Gods justice. Thou spiest them here and there, in every Town, and in every parish, in every Countrey: doe they not all wit 2.

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neſſe that he is a juſt God? Read *Pſalm* 7. 11, 12, 13. *God hath bent his bow already* (ſaith *David*) the arrow is *ready* to flie out of the ſtring: It will not be long before it hit *thee*, if thou meditate not upon amendment: *God is angry with the wicked every day*, as an angry man uſeth to ſay, I will be revenged on thee. Wilt thou not give over thy ſins? I will be revenged on thee. Read *Pſal* 11. 5, 6, 7. Meditate on this; he will neither ſpare King nor ſubject, nor rich nor poore, nor noble nor baſe, nor Judges and Juſtices; yet judges and Juſtices may ſpare, but God will not ſpare: they may bee bribed to pardon, but God will not be fee'd to ſpare them that goe on in their wickedneſſe; and doe I think to eſcape? Nay, my ſoule, thou canſt never eſcape, except thou obeyeſt.

3. The third ground is, *Meditate on the wrath of God*; Oh! what wrath is it? Can I ſtand againſt it? *It burnes like an Oven, and all the proud, and all that doe wickedly, ſhall be as ſtubble, and the day of wrath ſhall burne them up. Behold this*, ſaith the Text. *Mal.* 4. 1. Behold it, and meditate on it. Can I goe naked in a hot fiery oven? Can I lift up my hands againſt it? My hands will be ſcorched. Can I kick againſt it? My legs will be baked. Can I blow upon it with my mouth? my mouth is fired. Did I ever ſee lime burned? were I in the limes roome, could I endure that boyling? and yet if I live in my ſinnes, I ſhall be *as the burning of lime*, *Iſay* 33. 12. Let thy heart meditate terror; *Who among us ſhall* be able

able to *dwell* (that is the meaning of it, as *Montanus* sheweth) who among us shall dwell *with devouring fire? who among us shall burne with everlasting burnings*? vers. 14. Gods *mercie* shall say, Take him *wrath*: I would have converted him, but he would not. Gods *goodnesse* shall say, Take him *wrath*: I would have been kinde unto him, but he hath abused me. Gods *patience* shall say, Take him *wrath*: I have suffered him a great while, that he might have time of repentance, but he repented not in that time. *God smote Egypt in their first-borne.* Why? *For his mercy endureth for ever. God overthrew Pharaoh and his hoast*: Why? *For his mercy endureth for ever.* Psal. 136. 15. *He smote great Kings, Sihon a King, and Og a King: for his mercy endureth for ever.* So will God damne thee that art a *drunkard*: Why? for his mercie endureth for ever. God will confound thee that art a *worldling*: Why? for his mercy endureth for ever. God will be revenged on thee that art a *Luke-warmling*: Why? for his mercy endureth for ever. This may well make thee tear the haire of thy head, rather then let thee go on in thy sinnes. See *Jerem.* 7. 29. Meditate on this.

The fourth ground: *meditate on the constancie of God.* As the Lord was an enemy to wicked men, so he continues the same God still, a constant enemy to them still. As the Lord would not endure sinne heretofore, so hee is constant, hee still will not endure it. Did the Lord once say, *Weep and howle yee drunkards? Joel* 1. 4.

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5. he is constant, so he saith still. Did the Lord say, *he would burn up Sabbath-breakers?* Jer. 17. 27, he is constant; so he saith still. *Who ever hardned his heart against the Lord, and prospered?* Job 9. 14. as if he should say, I put it to thee to meditate of it: canst thou shew me a president? did ever any man harden his heart against Gods Word, in his sin, that prospered? Did *Senacherib* prosper in his will-worship? Did *Judas* prosper in his covetousnesse? Did *Jeconiah* prosper in his stubbornnesse? Where is the Scribe? where is the receiver? where is he that counted the towers? (saith the prophet) *Your fathers where are they*, saith *Zachary?* Did not my words take hold of them? and are they not all now in hell, that have ever lived and died in their sin, from the beginning of the world? Thou canst not shew me one drunkard, or one mocker, or one profane person, or one formall professor, from the day that man was created upon the earth, that is not now in hell, if he be dead. Meditate on this, how canst thou expect to be the one onely in all the world that shall escape, if thou livest and diest in thy sins? If hell were opened, and the bottomlesse pit were lookt into, thou shouldest see *every* soul that ever lived, and *died* in their sins, even every soul; there is not one soul missing. Meditate on this; when I die, do I think I shall not be there? nay I shall be there too, unlesse aforehand I enter into the *strait gate*, and walk in the *narrow way* of newnesse of life.

The

The Second SERMON OF The uſe and benefit of Divine Meditation.

HAGGAI. 1.5.

Now therfore thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, Conſider your wayes.

NOw followes the manner, how to *follow* Meditation *home* to the heart. Here are *foure* things to be practiſed.

First, *weigh and ponder all theſe things in thy heart.* It's ſaid of *Mary*, ſhee *pondered*, Luke 2, 19. *and kept* 1.

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all these sayings in her heart: verse 51. The words signifie two things: First, shee *compared* these things together. Secondly, she *cast them all in the scales* together. Dost thou know God is mercifull? ponder it with his justice. Dost thou know that Jesus Christ died for sinners? ponder it with the true drift of it, how that it is not to let men go on *in* their sins, but to save them *from* their sins. Dost thou obey God in this or that Commandement? O ponder thy life with the rest, *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy wayes be established.* Prov. 4. 26. A man that eates his meat well, forty morsels well, yet one crum going awry throttles him. Thou walkest in these and *these* Commandements; yea, but there be *other* Commandments besides these: dost thou walk in them too? thou must, if thou meanest to have thy wayes to be established. The Jewes had their *continers*, *talents*, *mina's sicles*, which were greater weights; so they had also their *gerahs*, and *agorahs*, smaller measures, and smallest of all: so have thou greater and lesse weights; great ones to ponder the great Commandments, and lesse to weigh even the least of Gods Commandments: and see thou make true *Evangelicall* weight, or else all will not be well. Suppose a man were to pay a 100 pound of good and lawfull money, and in weight, upon forfeiture of all that he hath, if he weigh it not; but the Creditor doth, and finds it light; he is undone. If thou pondereſt not thy wayes, *God* will *ponder* them: *Prov.* 5. 21.

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the word ſignifies, he weighs, and ponders them in a ballance, or ſcales; he puts the Word of his Goſpel in the one, and thy goings and obedience in the other. *Thou art weighed, and art found light, thy kingdom is departed from thee:* ſaith God to *Belſhazzar*, *Dan.* 5. 27. So if thou be light, thou ſhalt be weighed, and ſo found, thou ſhalt loſe the kingdom of heaven for ever.

Secondly, ſtrip ſin, and look upon it ſtark naked: ſin covers and diſguiſeth it ſelf, with pleaſure, profit, eaſe, and many a whoriſh garment, and ſo inticeth the heart. Even a toad, if ſhe were covered over with gold, thoſe that ſaw onely the gold; would pocket it up; if it were naked, they would fling it in the kennell. Why do men love covetouſneſſe? Why, its hooded with profit. Why carding, dicing, hunting, hawking, tabring, piping, and more then the word alloweth? Why? they are cloathed with pleaſure, and delight. Its the duty of Miniſters to unmask and uncaſe ſin, and pluck off the vail that covers it from appearing unto men. The not doing of this is the cauſe, that men do not meditate on the vileneſſe of their ſins, never are humbled, never eſcape Gods wrath; even becauſe they do not *diſcover mens iniquities*. *Lam.* 2. 14. Alas, the profit of thy ſins ſhall ceaſe, the pleaſure ceaſe, the eaſe ceaſe, and all theſe goodly ſuits ſhall vaniſh away, when the ſoul comes to die, or to ſtand before the judgement ſeat of Chriſt: ſin will remain, but thy ſilver, and thy gold, where will that be then? thy laughter, and

thy merriment, what will become of that then? thy delight will be *gone*. Meditate therefore with thy ſelfe, my ſin is now gainfull, and eaſie, and pleaſant; but what will my ſin become, when I come to lie on my death-bed? what good will it doe me, when I have moſt need of ſuccour? I will never acknowledge *him* my freind that will turn againſt me, when I have moſt need of him. Alas, I muſt die, I muſt come to judgement, I muſt goe either to heaven, or to hell: the profit that I get now by my ſins, will it beſtead me *then*? the pleaſure, the eaſe that I now find in ſin, will it help me *there*? Alas no, it will then be my break-neck, it will be a Devill unto me: the more I have been delighted with it, the more it will gall me: the more I have gotten by it, the more it will damne me: the ſin which I moſt of all loved, will moſt of all torment me. *Eccleſiaſt.* 11. 9. look thus upon ſin.

The third means: *dive into thine owne ſoul and heart*? there is a tough *brawn* over thy heart, that it feels not its ſins. Now Meditation muſt look through, and come to the heart at the *quick*, and cauſe the truth to dive into the deep places of the ſoule. When the timber is hard, the workman cannot thruſt in the nail with the weight of his hand: no, he muſt *hammer* it in. Meditation is the hammering of the heart. It's a pertinent phraſe, *Jer.* 23. 24. *Is not my word like a fire,* (ſaith the Lord) *and like a hammer that breaketh the rocks in peices*? There be two ſimilitudes, firſt, of a *hammer*: the Word of God is the

the hammer; meditation is the hand that taketh this hammer, and knocks the nail into the rocky heart; and makes it enter: Wilt thou not feele? Ile make thee feele: (saith meditation) wilt thou not take notice of thy wretched estate? Meditation comes with blow after blow, and makes it take notice. Secondly, of *fire*; the word is like fire; Meditation kindles it about the heart. A man benummed with cold is senseleſſe; the water frozen with cold, though the leaſt peble would have ſunk in it before, now a great milſtone is able to lie upon it, and not ſink; the water is able to beare it: ſo is the heart, be it ſins never ſo heavie, as the hill of Baſan, yet it bears it and feels no weight: but Meditation thawes the heart, and then every ſinne pincheth and oppreſſeth. *Is not my word like fire?* as if he ſhould ſay, think of it, and muſe of it, and meditate of it, and thou ſhall feele it as a fire. Meditation is the often ſmiting of the heart with this hammer: ſo did *Ephraim*, *ſmite upon his thigh*: Jer. 31. 19. like a man in a miſerable agony, he thumps his own breaſt, and in a vexation ſtrikes his hand on his thigh. Oh miſerable wretch that I am! So did *Ephraim*, Oh what an unruly Ox am I! how unwilling am I to bear the yoke of the Lord? Oh and oh the hardneſſe of my heart! oh that I could tell how to beat thee black and blue! Many men ſmite their hearts, but they ſmite them not often enough. When *Eliſha* bad *Joaſh* ſmite upon the ground, *he ſmote thrice and ſtayed.* The man of God ſaid to him in anger, *Thou*

shouldest have smitten five or six times, for then thou hadst smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed them, whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice. 2. Kin. 13. 19. So men smite their hearts twice or thrice or so, but they will not smite their sins dead: it may be they break the head of their sins, but they recover again, and grow strong upon them, as at first. Thou must smite five or six times, yea fifty times five times, till thou hast quite broken the impostume of thy heart. Meditate on the *mercies* of God, and with them smite it often and often: Meditate on the *justice* of God, and with it smite it again, and again: Meditate on the *wrath* of God, which is as a consuming fire, and with it smite it soundly. Meditate on the *truth* of the Lord, this threatning and that threatning; this commandement, and that commandement; this promise and that promise; and with all these smite it to powder.

The forth manner; *Anticipate and prevent thine owne heart*: meditate what thy heart will one day wish, if it be not humbled, and tell thy soule as much; thou wilt one day wish, Oh that I had been humbled under the reproofes of the Lord! Oh that I had been wise to have understood mine owne mercie! Cursed bee the day that ever I neglected the means of grace; so the Lord brings in a foolish obstinate sinner, cursing and banning his owne soule, sobbing and howling at the last, *Oh how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproofe! and have not obserued the voyce of my Teachers, nor inclined mine*

eare

eare to them that instructed mee? Pro. 5. 12, 13. I had Ministers to preach to me, but I would not come at them: or if I did, I cared not for their doctrine: I had friends that advised me wel, but woe is me damned wretch! I heeded them not. Thus thou wilt cast the foole into thine owne teeth and sling a thousand curses into thine own face, because of thy madnesse. I might have learned. but I would not; I might have been humbled, but I would not: *I was almost in all evill in the midst of the assembly of the congregation, vers.* 14. I lived where the Saints of God were in whole assemblies, but I mockt them, I hated them, I misliked them for being too precise. I was not ashamed of my security, no not in thy sight. Thus thou wilt cry out one day, if now thou wilt not yeeld unto meditation, which must make this a present with thee. Know thou, O my soul, the time of thy *visitation* is at hand, thou wilt curse thy selfe hereafter, if thou doest not now be moved by Gods mercies, thou shalt never see mercie more; Now be awaked by Gods judgements, or else thou shalt feel them for evermore, now or for ever thou shalt roare for them. Then thou shalt curse thy gains and thy profits that bewitched thee, thou shalt curse thy pleasures and delights that besotted thee, curse thine own heart, and thine own soul, and thine own conscience that have damned thee. Meditation may tell thee, thus it will be with thee, unlesse thou obeyest now. *Hear ye me now, obye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth,* ver. 7. hear

the word now, and obey it, let it not depart out of thy meditation. Now be humbled with grace, or then thou ſhalt be humbled with horrour: then thou ſhalt wiſh, Oh that I had been ruled! When thou art in hell, then thou ſhalt meditate, Oh it was good counſell that ſuch and ſuch a Miniſter gave me; good counſell that ſuch a friend, and ſuch a brother gave me; but wretch that I was, I had not grace to follow it! I had more mind of my pleaſures, more mind of my vanities then of grace. Oh if it were to do again, I would not do ſo for a thouſand worlds: but alas, it is now too late. Therefore let Meditation preſſe this upon thee before-hand.

3. Now follows the third thing, how to put life to Meditation. Foure duties are to be done to this purpoſe

1. 1. Let Meditation haunt thy heart, let meditation dogge thee with the helliſh looks of thy ſins, and follow it with the dreadfull vengeance of God, haunt it with promiſes, haunt it with threatnings, haunt it with mercies, and haunt it with judgements, and haunt it with Commandments. The heart is like the Beaver, when it perceiveth it cannot poſſibly eſcape from the Huntſman, it cuts the member for which it is hunted, and flings it down, and ſo eſcapes (ſaith *Æſops:*) So purſue thy heart with its ſins, with the hue and cry of Gods mercies; purſue it with the hubbub of Gods judgements; let meditation haunt it, and let thy ſoul ſee it ſhall never be rid of the haunt; at laſt it will be content to part with

with its luſts. Let meditation ſay, Wilt thou forſake thine own mercies? If thou liveſt thus and thus, if thou prayeſt thus and thus, deadheartedly, thou kickeſt againſt thine own mercie, wilt thou ruſh upon the pricks? This mercie thou maiſt have, if thou wouldſt amend; that vengeance thou ſhalt have, if thou do not amend: Either cut off thy ſins, or elſe God will cut off thy ſoul. *Return, O Shulamite, return, return,* its the voice of Chriſt to thee: Let meditation ſay, Return, O my ſoul, return, return, and thou mayſt be ſaved; return, or elſe thou ſhalt be condemned. Now what was the effect of this haunting meditation? *Or ere I was aware, my ſoul made me like the Chariots of Aminadab, verſ.* 12. That is, my ſoul muſing and meditating on theſe and theſe commandments, it ſo humbled my ſoul, that it made me yeeld; yea, and made me run as faſt as the Chariots of *Aminadab*, *freely* and *willingly* to Chriſt.

Deal with thy heart as *Junius* his father dealt with him: he ſeeing his ſon was Atheiſticall, he laid a Bible in every room, that his ſon could look in no room, but behold a Bible haunted him, upbraiding him, Wilt thou not read me, Atheiſt? Wilt thou not read me? And ſo at laſt he read it, and was converted from his Atheiſme: So let meditation haunt thy heart, hold forth the commandments, promiſes, threatnings of the Lord, that thy heart may ſee them; let meditation haunt thee in thy luke-warmneſſe: prayeſt thou thus luke-warm? This prayer will break

thy neck one day. Repenteſt thou? This luke-warm repentance will cauſe God to ſpue thee out of his mouth. Heareſt thou, ſpeakeſt thou, thinkeſt thou? Theſe luke-warm duties will confound thee ere long, if thou lookeſt not to it.

Let Meditation haunt thee, as they haunted *Nehemiah* with warnings, *ten times* (ſaith the Text) they ſent to *Nehemiah*, *they will be upon thee, Nehem.* 4. 12. Beware of the danger, the enemy will be upon thee: ten times they warned him, never giving over till *Nehemiah* looked about him, *verſ.* 13. So do thou haunt thine own heart: they will be upon thee, this curſe, this wrath, that hardneſſe of heart, this ſecurity will be upon thee. Ten times, yea, a thouſand times ten times, never give over thine own ſoul, untill thou haſt made it to ſubmit. Indeed there be ſome, let God ſend Meditations to haunt them, and follow them, ſaying, Repent, leave this or that ſin, why wilt thou be damn'd with this ſin? Oh forſake it, preſently they will gagge the mouth of Meditation, and of conſcience, and ſtrike them ſtark dead: as *Abner* when *Azahel* would haunt him, and follow him, and turn neither to the right hand, nor to the left, but follow him at the heels. *Turn aſide* (ſaith *Abner*) but he would not turn aſide from following him. Turn aſide from me (ſayes *Abner* again) or I will kill thee, but he would not turn aſide, he would follow him cloſe: Then he up with his Spear and ſlew him, 2 *Sam.* 2. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

So

So many deal with the meditation of conſcience, when conſcience would dogge them, and weary them out of their ſins, they will not: when conſcience would haunt them, they will not be haunted therewith; when conſcience would follow them up with their deſperate wilfulneſſe, they gall and wound, and murder conſcience to be quiet. But *David* haunted his heart, and would have it haunted.

2. The ſecond duty: *Let Meditation trace thy heart*, as it ſhould haunt thee, ſo alſo let it trace thee in the ſame ſteps. So would the Church, *Let us ſearch and trie our wayes, and turn again unto the Lord*: Lam. 3. 40. The word (in the originall, ſayes *Buxtorf*) ſignifies, *track or ſteps, ſtep by ſtep*: this ſtep was in the ditch, that in the mire, that ſtep awry: track them all, that we may ungo them all again, and turn unto the Lord. Never pray but let Meditation track thy prayer; this paſſage was right, that paſſage was amiſſe. Never keep a Sabbath but let Meditation track thy keeping of it; this duty was ſincere, that was rotten: Never do any thing but let Meditation track it. This thought, this word, this action was warrantable; that was out of the way: track thy heart, as the Lord tracted *Eliah*, he tract him in the wilderneſſe, he tracted him under the juniper tree, he tract him in the cave; *What doſt thou here Eliah? go forth*: 1 King. 19. *What doſt thou here Eliah, go, return.* He tract him in the mount, *Go, return, what doſt thou here Eliah?* this is not a place for thee. So let Meditation wait thee: what doſt

doſt thou here, O ſinner? what doſt thou here O drunkard? in thy covetouſneſſe, or in thy prophaneneſſe, what doſt thou here? this is not a place for thee, unleſſe thou mean to periſh. It may be thou art now ſcard out of theſe ſins, and art run into *civill honeſty*; let Meditation ſtill track thee. What doſt thou do here, O ſinner? Civilitie is not a caſe fit for thee, unleſſe thou wert better, thou ſhalt be torn in peeces. It may be thou art driven out of thy civility, and art gone further, to the profeſſion of Religion, though it be without the power of it: let meditation ſtill wait thee. What doſt thou here, O ſinner? this ſorry kind of profeſſion is not a race fit for thee: unleſſe thou be godlier then ſo, thou ſhalt be devoured with everlaſting fire.

Meditation is like the courſing of a hare in the ſnow; the hare fearing to be taken by the dogs, here ſhe ſtops, there ſhe leaps, here ſhe interleaps, there ſhe goes backward, and forward upward and downward, and all to deceive the dogs, that they may not find her; but they go ſmelling and maundring, winding and turning, and track her ſtep by ſtep, till they find her: ſo meditation in the courſing of the ſoul, the heart hath a thouſand fetches, a thouſand meanders and labyrinths, a thouſand croſſe windings, and compaſſings, and deceits, and all to puzle Meditation. But Meditation muſt track the heart, as God dealt with *Job*, *he counted his ſteps*, ſtep by ſtep: *Job* 14.16. Meditation is the ſouls blood-hound, it will never leave howling, the wrath of God, till

till it hath taken the hearts ſin for a prey; Meditation haunts it out of one ſin, and it runs into another; Meditation haunts it out of that, and it runs into a third: Meditation is a good purſevant, it proſecutes the ſinner, and attaches him.

Now becauſe the heart is moſt cunning, and hardeſt to be trackt by its ſent, when the heart hath taken up abundance of good duties, and attained unto ſundry graces, theſe good duties and common graces drown the ſent of the hearts wickedneſſe. As Huntſmen obſerve, that the hounds cannot well hunt in the Spring, as *Theophraſtus*, and *Pollux*, and others obſerve: the ſweet odors of the flowers and herbs (ſayes *Oppian*) hinder the hounds from ſmelling the hare: ſo it is with Meditation; it is hard for it to *track* the heart in the green Spring time of *civill* honeſtie and formalitie. And therefore let Meditation make diligent ſearch, ſaith he. Pſal. 77. 16

The third duty: *hale thy heart before God*, and let Meditation bring it before his throne, and there powre out thy complaint againſt it before God, there out with all thy villany, and article againſt thy ſelf, and bring as many complaints againſt thy ſelf before heaven, as there be drops in a bucket full of water. So do the godly: *I powred out all my complaints before him*, (Pſal. 102. in the preface) I powred out my complaints, as a man powreth out water out of a veſſell; generally men are willing to call for mercie, but they are not ſo willing to *bring complaints* unto God againſt themſelves: ye ſhall have

have them *whisper* after the Minister, as he is begging for pardon and mercie, but they will not do so, whiles he is complaining of their sins; the hellish and devillish abominations of their heart. These are men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith, and shall never have mercie, till they be as forward to complain of their sins, as to be plaintives for mercie.

When a man in Meditation meets with a hard matter, that he cannot sufficiently dive into, he breaks it to another: so do thou to God; break all thy heart to God, tell him of thy hardnesse of heart, of the pride of thy heart, of the desperate prophanenesse of thy heart: but take these rules with thee.

First, thy complaint must be *full of sorrow*: Psal. 55.

2. Secondly, it must be a *full complaint*, of *all* thy sins, and of *all* thy lusts; *Lam.*2.18,19. *Poure out thy heart like water before the face of the Lord.* Water runs all out of a vessell when you turn the mouth downward; never a spoonfull will stay behind. The wicked will not complain of their sins *fully*: they make hypocriticall professions. If it be a sin, I am sorry for it; (saies one) if it be naught, I cry God mercie; (saith another) when their own consciences tell them it is a sin, yet they will not complain of it absolutely.

3. Thirdly, thy complaint must be with *aggravation*: thou must aggravate thy sins by all the *circumstances*, that may shew it to be odious, as *Peter* did: *when he thought thereon, he wept*

Mark

Mark 14. 72. the originall hath it, *he cast all these things one upon another*. Wretch that I was, Christ was my master, and yet I denyed him; such a good master, that he called me before any of my fellow Apostles, and yet I denyed him; I was ready to sink once, he denyed not me: I was to be damned once, he denyed not my soul, and yet I denyed him; he told me of this sin beforehand, that I might take heed of it, and yet I denyed him. I said I will not commit it, nor forsake him, and yet I denyed him: yea, this very night, no longer ago, did I say and say again, I would not deny him, and yet I denyed him, yea, I said, though all others denyed him, yet would not I; and yet worse then all others, I denyed him with a witnesse, before a maid, before a damosel; nay, more filthy beast that I am, I said I did not know the man; nay more, I sware I did not know him; nay, more then all this, I did even curse my self with an oath, that I did not know him: nay more, all this evill did I, not above five or six strides from my Lord and Saviour: nay more, even then, when if ever I should have stood for him, I should have done it then, when all the world did forsake him. Oh wretch that I was, I denyed him! he cast up all these circumstances together, and meditating on them, *he went out, and wept bitterly*.

Fourthly, thy complaint must be *a self-condemning complaint*: thou must condemn thy self, and lay thy self at hell gates, and set the naked point of Gods vengeance at thy throat.

Thus

Thus and thus have I lived, damned, cast-away, as I have deserved to be! So did *Ezra* in the behalfe of the Jewes, *Ezra* 9.

For, 1 He *fell on his face*; he did not bow down on his knees; but like a man astonished, he fell on his knees, ready to feele on the ground in amazement.

2. He *spread out his hands unto the Lord, verse* 5, as if he should say, here is my heart-blood. Lord here is my breast, Lord; we deserve thou shouldst stab us with thy wrath.

3. He *blushes* to look heaven in the face, *verse* 6. so vexed to think on the sinnes of his people, that he is even confounded to beg mercy.

4. He is (as it were) *dumb* and *speechlesse* before God: *And now our God, what shall we say after all this? for we have forsaken thy commandements, verse* 10. Shall I excuse the matter? alas! it is inexcusable. *What shall we say after all this?* Shall we call for thy *patience*? We had it, and yet were little the better. Shall we call for *mercie?* Why we had it, and yet our stubborne hearts would not come downe. I know not what to say for our selves: for we have sinned against thee.

5. He declares Gods truth, that he had *warned them by his Prophets*, (*verse* 11.12.) but no warning can better us.

6. He *shewes how God had punished them, yet they would not be humbled*: for all that God had brought upon them *lesse evils then they deserved*, and wrought *deliverances* for them, which they

they could not have expected; *What shall we say, should we for all this break thy Commandements? verse* 13,14. What can we expect but hell and confusion?

7. He is *sensible of Gods judgements and righteousnesse: O Lord, thou art righteous:* as if hee should say, How canst thou spare us for this sinne? How can it stand with thy righteousnesse? How is it that such hell-hounds as we are, should live above ground, when thou art so righteous a God? It is a wonder that the earth opens not her mouth for to swallow us up quick: for, *O Lord, thou art righteous.*

8. *He laies downe his soule, and all the peoples soules at Gods feet*; as if he should say, here we be, thou maist damne us if thou wilt; *Behold, we are all here before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee, because of this, ver.* 15. Behold here we are: rebels we are: here are our heads and our throats before thee, if now thou shouldst take us from our knees unto hel, & from our prayers unto damnation, we cannot aske thee why thou doest so: Oh it's mercie, it's mercie indeed, that we have been spared. Thus meditation must bring our hearts before God, and there complaine against them before heaven.

Meditation should deale with the heart, as the Father did with his possessed child, who carried him to Christ; saying, *Master, my child is possessed with a Devil,* even *a dumb* spirit, *and I spake to thy Disciples that they should cast him out, but they could not,*

not Mark 9. 18. *Bring him to me* (saith Christ) vers. 19. *How long is this agoe since this came to him? Of a child* (saith the Father) *and often it hath cast him into the fire, and often into the water to destroy him; but if thou canst doe any thing* (as certainly thou canst doe all things) *have compassion on us, and help us.* verse 22. And then Christ helps him. So let meditation *drive* thy heart to God, saying, Lord here is my heart (I beleeve) possest with a Devill; for it is a most abominable sinful heart: I brought my heart to thy *Ministers* to cure it, to *Sermons* to *Prayer*, to all other good duties, but *they* could not help me: my heart is a Devillish heart, still my heart is wicked, and rebellious still, the Devill; oh! the Devill is in it still! Oh, how he tempts me! he holds me, hee casts me into the fire of *this* lust, and into the water of ever-flowing iniquity. Have thou compassion, come and help me; for my heart is miserably vexed with Satan; when I pray, the Devill stuffes me with dead thoughts, and drousie desires, the Devill fills me with wandring Imaginations, and I know not what; when I hear the Word, the Devil makes me to rise up against it, or forget it, or not obey it; when the *Sabbath* is come, the Devill sets me on thinking my own thoughts, and speaking mine own words; when a *Sacrament* is come, the Devill hinders me in *selfe-examination*, the Devill disappoints me of my *preparation*: Oh have thou compassion on me.

The fourth duty; *let meditation, when it hath held*

held thy heart before God, there caſt thee downe before him: when Meditation hath ſearched out thy caſe, and made it appeare how wofull it is, then let it lay thee along before God, with *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* So it did with them in *Acts* 2. 27. as if they ſhould ſay (ſaith *Chryſoſtome*) we have not one jot of hope to finde mercy, ſo long as we live as we do. What ſhall we do? Say what thou wilt, our ears are ready to hear it; command what thou wilt, our ſouls, what ever it be, are willing to do it: bid us ſuffer what ever thou pleaſeſt, tell us what it is, and we will endure it. They did not ſay, (notes *Chryſoſtome*) *How ſhall we be ſaved*, as wicked men do: they deſire to be ſaved, but their maine care is not to ſee *what* they muſt do, they are told what they muſt do, and yet refuſe to do it; but thy *chiefe ſtudy* muſt be, to caſt thy ſelfe down before God, with the good Jaylor, *Sirs, what ſhall I doe to be ſaved? Acts* 16. 30. Firſt, *what muſt I do?* and then *to be ſaved.* Firſt, thy care muſt be what to do to get out of thy ſins, how to be rid of thy luſts, and then to be ſaved; as if he ſhould ſay, I ſee I am at a damned paſſe, and therefore I was a making away my ſelfe, the fire of hell did ſlay my ſoule: but now is there hope of ſalvation? is there indeed? Oh tell me, I am willing to do any thing, what muſt I do? Keep nothing back of all the will the Lord; be it puniſhments to ſuffer, tell me of it, I am ready to beare it; be it precepts for to do, though never ſo irkſome, O let me know

it, and I will not refuse it. *What must I doe to be saved?* When the heart is thus humbled upon sound meditation, it's willing to do or suffer any thing. *Jonah* is willing to be cast into the sea, being humbled. *Jonah* 1.2. *Here I am, Lord, deal with me as thou wilt.*

Motive 1. The first Motive: *Is it a folly not to meditate?* Should a man walk on in a course, and not meditate whether it will tend? When he falls into mischeife, what will he say? I never thought of this before, I never considered that this would be the end. Now it is the part of a fool to say, *I never thought*, as the Latin proverb hath it; when the Steed is stolen, if he should then shut the Stable doore, what wouldest thou say? Hee should have thought of that before. The rich man in the Gospell had these meditations in his heart; he thought within himselfe, What shall I do, because I have no roome where to bestow, my fruits? He said in his heart, This will I do, I will pull down my barnes and build greater; and will say to my soule, *Soule, soule, thou hast much goods laid up for many yeares, eate, drinke, and be merry*; Luke 12. 17, 18, 19, 20. *Thou fool* (said God) *this night shall thy soule bee required of thee; then, whose shall these things bee that thou hast provided?* God said thus unto him; not as if God spake thus familiarly unto him (saith *Theophylact*) but it is a parable, and God sayes so in his word, *Thou foole, this night shall they require thy soule of thee.* In this night of thy blindnesse, in this night of thy security, shall they require it:

hee

hee doth not say, I will require thy soule of thee, but *they*: he doth not say who, but *they*, the Devils in hell, God knowes who shall come, thou shalt die, and they shall fetch away thy soul to hell: *they* shall *require* it. A godly mans soule is not required, but rather he requires God to take away his soule: he is willing to die, that he may be with Christ: but a wicked mans soule is required of him: hee would willingly not die, but that his soul is required of him, and he must die. Doubtlesse the rich foole now thought with himselfe, I never thought that I should have died so soone, and therefore now he calls (it may be) to his *Lord, Lord*, and cries God mercie. But what will they say to him? Thou shouldst have thought of this before.

The wise man shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the promotion of fooles, Prov. 3. 35. The wise and prudent, those that truely meditate of things before hand, shall have glory; but fools that hope to be promoted to glory and salvation, shame and confusion of face shall be all their promotion, and when they come thereto, besides their expectation; what will they say? We never thought it would be thus with us before; but fooles as we were, we thought to be promoted to heaven: like *Haman*, when King *Ahasuerus* said unto him, What shall be done to the man whom the King will honour? O thus and thus (saith *Haman*) for he thought, I am the man whom the King intendeth to honour, *Esther* 6. 6. but when *Haman* was presently after to be han-

ged on a gallowes, he might rightly say, I never thought of this before. So what shall be done to the man whom the Lord will honour? Thus and thus sayest thou, he shall have mercies, blessings, heaven: I, for thou thinkest I am the man that God intendeth thus to honour; but when thou art come to hell, what wilt thou say then? I never thought of this before, that so it would be.

Mot. 2. The second Motive is, *Thou wouldest be loth to have the brand of a Reprobate*: Not to meditate, is that brand; *The wicked through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God; neither is God in all his thoughts, Psal.* 10.4. He scornes to be so poring upon Bibles, to be so wracking his mind with his sins; *He hath said in his heart, God will not require it, vers.* 13. God requires no such scrupulosity nor strictnesse.

Mot. 3. The third Motive is, *Thou wouldst be loth to rob God of his honour*, and the maine part of his service, whis is Meditation. *Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and with all thy soule, Matth.* 22.38. How can this bee true of them (saith *Chrysostom*) who become *vain in their imaginations?* Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soule and mind: And so do I (saist thou:) So dost thou? What, and not love God with all that is in thy heart? Thy thoughts are in thy heart, thy meditations are in thy mind; If thy thoughts then, and meditations be not of God, thou dost not love God with all thy heart. *David* did not only pray, that *the words*

of

of his mouth, but also that *the thoughts of his heart* should be ever *acceptable to the Lord*, *Psal.* 19. 14. not only that he might be full of heavenly communication in his mouth, but also of holy meditation in his heart. *Behold* (saith he) *thou requirest truth in the inward parts*, *Psal.* 51. 6. And meditation is one of the duties of truth in the inward parts.

The fourth Motive: *Thou wouldst be loth that all the worship thou givest to God, should be abominable*: so it will be without meditation; meditation *before* it, meditation *after* it. *Mot.* 4.

First, *Thou must meditate before thou goest about a duty of Gods worship*: consider before thou hear the word of God, meditate what thou art going about, *Hearken O daughter, and consider, incline thine eare*, *Psal.* 45. 10. First, *consider and meditate*, and then *incline thine eare*. This is part of those words often in Scripture, *Be ready, be ready: Be ready and come up* saith God, Exod. 34. 2.) *Be ready against the third day*, Exod. 19. *Gather your selves together*, *Zeph.* 2. 1. that is, *prepare to meet thy God, O Israel*, Amos 4. 12.

Secondly, *meditate after the duty*. When men part with men, they use to give one another a farewell, and not bluntly deliver their mind one to another, and so turn their backs one upon another. *Lysias* could not write a letter to *Felix*, and break up abruptly, but he gave him a *farewell*, *Acts* 23. 30. Neither may a man when a *duty* is done, go away bluntly from God, but give him a farewell by holy meditation. It's an unseemly

kicking of a duty, as most men do when they are come to the end of their prayers, *to whom with the Father and holy Spirit, be ascribed all praise and glory, Amen*; Come, is dinner ready? or, what news do you hear? This is unmannerlinesse towards the ordinances of God. A man that hath been at a good dinner will sit a while after it, or walke a while, he will not presently run to his worke, that the meat may digest the better: So when thou hast been at Gods dainties, sit after it a while, pawsing and meditating thereof, as often as thou well mayest, let it have its working a while.

What is the reason thou hast so many by-thoughts in prayer? Because thou dost not meditate before-hand and after. Hence it is that thine eyes are not directed to the duty, but like a blind Archer thou shootest but by *aim*; when the good Archer shoots, he must have the *white* in his eye still, which he must levell at. *My voyce shalt thou hear betimes in the morning, in the morning will I direct my prayer to thee, and will look up*, *Psal.* 5. 3. How came that? you may look on his *meditations*, *vers.* 1. By meditation he was wont to direct and levell his prayer to God. Wicked men know that God is before them, as a blinde man may learne that the But is before him, but they see not God *before* them to direct their prayers unto him: they pray at rovers. Thou must use then to meditate of God, that thy prayers may bee directed: if thou prayest not thus, thy prayers are like them in the Prophet, who

drew

drew neer to God with their lippes, but their hearts were far from him, like an arrow beside the But, or far from the mark, either wide or short. *They have not cried unto me with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds*, *Hosea* 7.14. They prayed, but they prayed not to me; (saith the Lord) as the White may say of a bungling Archer, hee shoots, but not at me: when he shooted, he shot another way. God counts all such prayers no better then *howlinz of Dragons and wild beasts*; (so the word signifies saith *Scindler*) God would as lief, and rather too, that a Dog, or a Wolfe, or Dragon should howl in his hearing, then hear such a prayer as this is. The onely way therefore to performe duties of Gods worship purely, is cheifly *meditation, meditation, meditation.*

THE DANGER of deferring REPENTANCE,

DISCOVERED

In a Sermon preached at *Maidstone* in *Kent*, Septem. 25. 1629.

By that Reverend and faithfull Minister of the Word,

WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.
Sometime Fellow of *Pembroke Hall* in *Cambridge*, and late Parson of *Rochford* in *Essex*.

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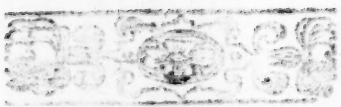

A SERMON OF

Mr. William Fenners

at *Maidſtone*, Septem. 25. 1629.

Prov. 1. 28.

Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer: they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me.

THere is a good Engliſh Proverb amongſt us, that *he that neglects the occaſion, the occaſion will neglect him.* *Solomon* wiſely begins his Proverbs with it: for he bringeth in the Wiſdom of his Father in theſe five particulars: firſt, *making a generall Proclamation* in the 20 verſe, *Wiſdome crieth without, ſhee uttereth her voice in the ſtreets.* He compareth God unto a Crier that goeth up and down the City from ſtreet to ſtreet, and from doore to doore, crying his commodity, even the richeſt that ever was, which is a Chriſt, 1.

a Christ for *redemption*, a Christ for *sanctification*, a Christ to *enlighten* those that walk in darkneſſe, and in the ſhadow of death. *Ho, every one that thirſteth*, here is a *Chriſt* for you.

2. Secondly, here is *a mercifull reprehenſion*, in the 22. verſe, *O yee fooliſh, how long will yee love fooliſhneſſe, and yee ſcorners take pleaſure in ſcorning?* Fooliſh indeed to be without Chriſt: fooliſh to be without grace, fooliſh to chafer away our ſouls for ſin. *How long yee ſcorners will yee take pleaſure in ſcorning?* will you *ſtill* perſiſt in your wickedneſſe, and never have done with your ſins? will you never turn back again, but damne your ſouls for ever? *O yee fooliſh, how long will you love fooliſhneſſe?*

3. Thirdly, here is *a gracious exhortation* in the 23. verſe: *turn you at my correction: lo, I will poure out my mind unto you, and make you to underſtand my words.* As if he ſhould ſay, Do you not ſee how your are going apace to confuſion, and that the way you take, leadeth unto deſtruction? turn yetherefore, turn ye back again, for here is a Chriſt behind you: O turn ye, for if yee go on in

4. your ſins, you periſh forever.

1. Fourthly, here is *a yearning promiſe* made unto the world, in the end of the 23. verſe; *La, I will poure out my ſpirit upon you, and cauſe you to underſtand my words.* As if he ſhould ſay, return back again with me, and you ſhall have better welcome then you can poſſibly have, if you go on in your ſins: the Devill will never let you gain ſo much by your living in your luſts, as you ſhall do by

repentance

repentance for them, and forſaking of them. For *behold, I will poure out my ſpirit upon you*, whereby you ſhall be far greater gainers, then you ſhall be by your ſins.

Fifthly, here is *a grievous threatning* againſt the world, even all thoſe that have loytered out the day of grace. As time and tyde ſtayes for no man, no more doth the day of grace: *Becauſe I have called, and you refuſed; I have exhorted, but you have not regarded*; I have denounced judgements againſt you for your ſins, but you have harned your hearts; now a day of woe and miſery ſhall come upon you, a time of vengeance and deſolation ſhall over-take you; there will a day come wherein there will be weeping, and crying Mercie (Lord) mercy; but I tell you beforehand what you ſhall truſt to: let this be your leſſon, now I call, and you will not hear; now I ſtretch out my hands, but you will not regard: *you ſhall ſeek me early, but you ſhall not find me: and ſhall crie, but you ſhall not be heard.* 5.

The words are a thunderclap againſt all thoſe that procraſtinate their repentance, and returning home unto God, wherein *note*, firſt, *the parties* themſelves that do prolong this time of grace, *they*: that is, they who when God cals on them, will not hear; when God invites them by his mercies, patience, and forbearance, by his Miniſters and ſervants, by his corrections and judgements, by all fair means and foul means, yet withſtand the means of grace: *they* are the men, *they* ſhall call, but God will not anſwer. 1.

Secondly,

2. Secondly, here is *their ſeeking after God*; they ſhall *call upon me.*

3. Thirdly, here is *their earneſt and diligent ſeeking unto God*; they ſhall not onely *call*, but *ſeek* to, and not onely ſeek, but ſeek as to *labour* to find: nay they ſhall ſeek me *early*. even ſtrive to goe about it with all haſte, and flie to repentance, *but they ſhall not find me.*

4. Fourthly, here is *the unſeaſonableneſſe of the time* of their ſeeking, *then*: that is a demonſtrative, *then*; even a time which the Lord points at: as if he ſhould ſay, you ſhall ſee *then* theſe men will be of another mind, *then* they will be glad to be converted *then* they will be glad to come out of their ſins, *then* they will be glad to get grace, and ſeek reconciliation with God: but alas! they ſaw not this *then*, but God foreſaw it well enough; *then ſhall they call, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me.*

5. Laſtly, here is the *fruſtration of their hope*, which hath *two* things in it. Firſt, *in regard of their ſelves*, in regard of the flaw of their ſeeking, it being not aright. Secondly, *in regard of the juſtice of God*, who rewards every man according to his works. *But I will not hear them.* Whence obſerve this point of Doctrine.

Doct. 1. *Thoſe that will not hear God when he calleth them; God will not hear them, when they call upon him.* Thoſe that will not hear the Lord when he calleth upon them by the miniſtery of his Word, and voice of his Spirit, the Lord will

not

not hear them, when in their misery they call upon him.

Thus the Lord dealt with the people in *Ezekiels* dayes; the Lord called them to repentance and obedience: but when they stood out, and neglected the opportunity of grace, and seasons of conversion, see how God deals with them: *though they cry in mine eares with a loud voice, yet I will not hear them* (saith the Lord.) When men have gone beyond *the time* of Gods mercie, and out-rowed the tide of Gods forbearance, and will not return, the Lord sets it down with himself, that his wrath shall return upon them, he will no longer forbear: they had *a time* wherein the Lord did pitie them, and offered grace and mercie unto them, but they *neglecting* this season, and withstanding this proffer of grace, God resolves with himself they shall never have it again. There was a time wherein God did pitie them, but now he will not pitie them any more; *twenty five* yeers he called unto them, and sought to bring them home; but because they stood out and refused, the Lord saith, *I will love Ephraim no more.*

Beloved, there is a *double* day, a *white* day, and a *black* day; there is *a day of salvation*; *Isa.* 49. 9 this is the day in the which the Lord said to the prisoners, *Come forth*: and to those that lie in their sins, *repent* and *beleeve*. Now if any man will come forth and humble his soul before the Lord, let him come and welcome, for it is a day of *salvation*. But there is another day of

damnation

damnation, which is a dark day, a black and a duskie day, wherein the Lord will visit the sins of the world, and revenge the quarrell of his Covenant. *Hos.* 9. 7. *The day of visitation is come, yea the day of recompence; the people shall know it; the Prophet is a foole, and the spirituall man is mad.* Beloved, we are fools, and all the spirituall men under heaven are mad, that lay not this day to heart. For the day of the Lord is a day of visitation, and all the world shall rue it, though now men sleepe in security. If once mercy be rejected, and God turn away his eare from a man, then grace shall be no more, the doore of life shall for ever be shut up against him: and when once this day comes, he hath lost his own peace, and deprived himself of eternall happinesse.

Reas. 1. Now there are *three reasons* of this point; the first is *the Law of retaliation*, of rendring like for like, which is the justest law that can be made with man, for to give unto every man according to his works, to make him take such as he brings, (as the Heathen call it) to give a man *quid* for *quo*. Now if God call upon thee, and thou wilt not hear; it is righteousnesse with God, yea equity with God (that is more) that when thou callest on him, he should not heare thee. For thus runs the tenor of Gods Word, *Prov.* 28. 9. *He that turns away his eare from hearing the Law, even his prayers shall be abominable.* He that turns away his eare from Gods Law, God will turn away his eare from his prayer. He that *turns*, it is spoken in the present tense, that is,

is, he that *now* turns away his eare, his prayer *shall be* abominable (in the future tense) that is, the Lord marks what master or servant, what father or mother, what husband or wife, what man or woman it is, that turns away the eare of his head, or the eare of his heart, from hearing his will, and obeying of his Commandments, the Lord takes *speciall* notice of it, and sets it down in his Calender, and records it in his Memoriall; keeping a strict account thereof: as if God should say, Well; is it so? I *now call*, and will not this man or that woman *answer?* Do I now stretch out my hands, and will not they take care to obey me? Well, let them alone (saith God) there is a day coming, that I shall be a hearing of them; times of sorrow and misery will take hold of them, and then they in their afflictions will cry unto me, but I will not hear; they will begge for mercy, but I will not regard: they will *seek me early*, but they shall *not find me.*

It was one of the Articles of high Treason brought in against Cardinall *Woolsey*, that he had the pox, and a stinking breath, and yet durst come into the Kings presence: So it will be an Article against thee of high treason before the King of heaven, if thou come into his *presence* with the stinking breath of thy sins, living in thy lusts, and wallowing in thy filthinesse, all thy prayers are but as so many stinking breaths in the nostrils of the Lord, and every duty that thou performest unto the Lord, shall be as so many Articles of high treason against thee, for to condemne thee,

becauſe thou liveſt in rebellion, and a Traitour againſt God.

His prayer ſhall be abominable: he doth not ſay, I will turn away mine eare from hearing his prayer, which turns away his eare from hearing my Law, (that is the true expoſition of the words) no, like for like is ſometimes in juſtice: for if a man ſhould ſtrike a *Magiſtrate* a box on the eare, it were not juſtice for him to give him another: for it is a greater ſin to ſtrike a Magiſtrate, then any other *common* perſon; and therfore a greater puniſhment the Law requireth: So God doth not ſay, he will turn away his eare from hearing his prayer, but will ſerve him in a worſe kind, he will count it *abominable*, yea *abomination*, (in the abſtract) it ſhall be loathſome, yea loathſomneſſe it ſelf in the worſt manner. *Galat. 6. As a man ſoweth, ſo ſhall he reap: if thou ſowe ſparingly, thou ſhalt reap ſparingly*: if thou ſowe a dull eare to Gods Word, thou ſhalt reap a dull eare from God to thy prayer: for God will reward every man according to his works.

Reaſ. 2. Secondly, *becauſe of the time of Gods attributes*: both *mercy* and *juſtice* have their ſeaſon in this life; and when mercie hath acted her part, then commeth juſtice upon the ſtage, and acteth her part; ſo that God will have his attributes manifeſted to all the ſons of men, yea to the face of the whole world. There is no market, nor Fayre day that laſteth alwayes: if the countrey will not come in, the Tradeſmen will put up

up their wares, and be gone: but if they come in time, they may have a peniworth: otherwiſe if they come too late, they will find none. For the Merchant will not alwayes dwell in tents, but away he goeth, and will not ſtay for them. Beloved, Gods ſtanding is now open, and his ſhop ſet wide unto the ſons of men; if men will not come in, cheapen and by without money, whiles God offers his wares, he will put them up and be gone. For the Merchant will not loſe his wares, which he ſhould do, if he ſhould alwayes remain in the open ayre with them; if he alwayes continue in the fields expecting cuſtomers, his wares would ſpoyl and rot. So it is with God, how many ſweet counſels doth he loſe? how many ſweet exhortations? how many bleſſed Sermons, and holy Sacraments, and Sabbaths, doth he loſe? how many checks of conſcience? how many dayes of grace, and motions of his ſpirit have been ſquandred away in vain? do you think that God wil loſe all theſe; and let them rot upon the ſtall, with ſtaying for you? No, no: the *day* of *grace* and mercie will have an end, and grace and mercie will have an end; and then the day of wrath and vengeance will ſtep up. *To day if you will hear his voice, then harden not your hearts*: then they hardened their hearts, and would not be led by Gods mercies to forſake their ſins; *Therefore he ſware in his wrath that they ſhould never enter into his reſt.* If it be ſo with you as it was with Iſrael in the wilderneſſe, in the day of temptation, you do not

know but that your ſinnes may now begin to pluck vengeance upon you. I tell you, if you harden your hearts this day, you do not know but this very day the Lord may clap an oath upon your heads, that you ſhall never enter into his reſt. For one and the ſelfe-ſame occaſion laſts not *alwayes*: as every day is not a Market day, nor every week in the yeare a Faire week, nor every ſeaſon in the yeare a time of Spring or harveſt; ſo every day of a mans life may not claime to be the *day of grace*. Therefore if a man fore-ſlow it, now he fore-ſloweth his own happineſſe, and putteth off his owne peace for ever.

Excellent is that annotation of *Gregory* on *Job* 27. 9. *Will God heare his cry when trouble commeth upon him?* Beloved, now Gods patience is *troubled*, wilt not thou repent? Now Gods Spirit is troubled, wilt not thou obey? Now Gods Juſtice is troubled, wilt thou not relent? Now Gods Word is troubled, wilt thou refuſe to hearken? *Will God heare his cry?* He ſpeaketh interrogatively, as if he ſhould ſay, Art thou ſo mad, ſo vaine, ſo fooliſh, to promiſe to thy ſelfe being an hypocrite, that God will hear thy prayer? Oh no, then juſtice cometh to take place.

Reaſ. 3. Thirdly, it is Gods uſe to doe ſo in other things, even upon the contempt of temporall bleſſings; and therefore much more in matters of grace and ſalvation. Thus God promiſed to give Iſrael the Land of Canaan, *Num.* 12.22. but the

the text ſaith, *They tempted God ten times*, that is, (as ſome Expoſitors expound it) many times; or (as others) *ten* ſeverall times. But what ever the meaning of the text be, certainly it was very *many* times; ſo long, til at laſt *he ſware in his wrath that they ſhould never enter into his reſt*. Beloved, though there be many a hot ſwearer that regards not an oath; yet certainly if the Lord ſweare, we may beleeve him: the *Word* of God is as ſtrong as *oaths*: if he ſay it upon his word, wee are bound to beleeve it: how much more then, when he confirmes it with an oath? Therefore if the Lord ſweare thou ſhalt not, how dareſt thou, how canſt thou hope or think ever to enter into his reſt? This was almoſt fourty yeares before he died, that the Lord made this oath againſt them: and God knowes how many thouſands of them fel ſhort, not only of the land of Canaan, but alſo of the Kingdome of heaven.

So God took *Iſmael* an hundred and ſeventeen yeares before he died: *twenty* yeares God offered him grace and repentance, but he would not take warning; a mocker he was, and a mocker he would be: for he mocked *Iſaac* when he was a child of *ſix* yeares old; and no meanes would reclaim him, before he heard the voice, *Caſt out the bond-woman and her ſonne*: Out with him, (ſaith God) for he ſhall never be heire with my ſonne: this was an hundred and ſeventeen years before *Iſmaels* death.

And ſo God took *Saul*, five and thirty, or ſix and thirty yeares before he died, according to

Josephus Chronology, (if it bee true); howsoever, hee took him divers yeares before his death: for so the Scripture makes it plain, 1. *Sam.* 15. 29. *The strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent: for he is not a man that hee should repent. Therefore because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord also hath rejected thee from being a King.* And do not think that thou by thy prayers, and crying God mercie, canst ever alter him: for his councell is *immutable*, and hee is strong in his decree, and cannot change. *Hitherto* Grace and Mercie have been offered thee, which if thou hadst embraced, thou mightst have found mercy from the Lord, and the Kingdome should have been established and confirmed unto thee: but *now* it is too late: *for the strength of Israel cannot lie.*

God took *Esau fifte* yeares before his death: for so long he lived, after he sought the blessing with teares: but he was a hunting when God was a calling: he was following his prophanenesse when God was wooing him to repentance. At last when he called for repentance, and sought it earnestly, yea his soule was carefull for to get it; yet he could never obtaine it, though hee sought it earnestly with teares fiftie yeares before he died.

Now if the Lord so severely punish contempt of *temporall* blessings, O how will he punish the contempt of proffers of *grace* and salvation! I tell you God will be more strict in revenging of this sinne, then of any other sinne: he

he will come with Martiall law againſt all thoſe that contemne his Goſpell, *Joh.* 3. 18. *He that beleeveth not, is condemned already.* Doth Chriſt preach repentance and ſalvation, and the Kingdome of God; and wilt thou not repent and beleeve? Martiall Law (beloved) martiall law, hang him up; for he is condemned already. Even like a ſouldier that rebels againſt his General, & forſakes his *Colours*, they doe not caſt him into priſon, and ſtay for the Aſſizes, or Seſſions, but give him *Martiall Law*, even hang him up: So if the Lord ſound his Goſpell in thine eares, and offers thee conditions of peace, knocking at the doore of thy heart by his Spirit, and thou refuſe to open to him, thou art condemned already: for *the Strength of Iſrael cannot lie, nor repent*. Oh therefore take heed now whiles his word ſounds in thine eares, while his Spirit ſecretly whiſpers in thy heart to thee, open to him, for elſe thou art condemned for ever.

Take notice then, that God doth commonly give men a day, and no man or Angel doth know *how long* this day laſteth. To ſome it laſteth to their laſt gaſp; to ſome, to their old age; and to ſome, it is cut off in their childhood. God gave the Angels a day, the which becauſe they neglected, they are reſerved in chains of darkneſſe untill the great judgement day. God gave *Cain* a day, *Geneſ.* 4. During all the time of this day, though *Cain* ſinned again and again, and went on in his ſinnes a great while, yet he heard nothing but a ſtill voice, *If thou do well Cain, ſhalt thou not*

be accepted? but if thou doſt ill, ſinne lieth at the doore. But when no meanes will prevaile, but *Cain* will go on adding ſinne to ſinne, and murder unto all the reſt of his ſinnes, and ſo let go the ſeaſon of mercy, the Lords tells him from heaven, that the day of grace is paſt, the gate of mercy is ſhut againſt thee: for *thou art now accurſed from the earth.* As if the Lord ſhould ſay, Before I gave thee a day of ſalvation, and offered thee mercy, but thou wouldſt not accept of it; but now I have clapt a curſe upon thy ſoul, that thou ſhalt never claw off. So God gave *Nineveh* a day to repent, *Jons.* 3. *Yet forty dayes and* Nineveh *ſhall be deſtroyed.* God gave the Figtree a day, even three yeares, before he would have it cut down. God gave the old World a day of an hundred and twenty yeares; during this time God ſent unto them *Noah*, a Preacher of righteouſnes, to call upon them to repent, and ſo ſet it down alſo, that *his Spirit ſhall not alwayes ſtrive with man, but his time ſhall be an hundred and twenty yeares*: yet one writes, that the Lord cut off twenty of the hundred and twenty yeares, becauſe of their iniquities, which were ſo grievous, and provoked him ſo much, that they haſted him to come before he would have done. In all this ſpace if they had repented, they ſhould have found mercy from the Lord: but when this time was gone, and the *day* of grace was out, the Deluge came in upon them, and God by his judgments overthrew the whole World.

Object. You my ask me *when this day or ſeaſon of grace doth end*, or ceaſe.

I answer, that *neither men nor Angels can tell*; but this I say, *it may be yet this day of grace lasteth unto thee*, now it may bee God speaketh whom to thy soul, now it may be God warms thy heart, and givs thee good purposes & resolutions: now it may be the Lord Jesus passeth by thee in a good thought and desire; lay hold on it, for *thy day may cease this very night*, for ought thou knowest. *Luke* 17. 22. *The time shall come* (saith Christ) *when you shall desire to see one of the dayes of the Sonne of man, and shall not see it.* Now is the *day* of Christ upon you, now is Christ offering and preaching himself to you: but if you let *this* day passe, thou mayst desire to have one of the drops of that bloud that hath been offered to thee, and yet never have it: thou mayst desire to feele one rap of that Spirit that hath knockt at thy heart, and yet goe without it: thou maist intreat for one dram of that mercy that hath been offered, and thou hast rejected, but it shall never be granted to thee; God may clap that fearfull sentence upon thee, *Now henceforth never grow fruit more on thee*, never repentance come into thy heart more. If now thou wilt not repent and be converted, the Lord may set it down in his decree from this day forward, that thou mayst fumble about thy sinnes, but shalt never get victory over them: thou mayest ever bee mourning for thy corruptions, but never mourne aright for them: thou mayest blunder about repentance, but never *doe the work*. *Answ.*

Ezekiel

Ezekiel 24. 23. *You ſhall not mourne nor weep, but you ſhall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one towards another.* There is many a ſoule for contemning of God, and not taking up repentance while they may have it, this plague of God is come upon them, that they are ever repenting, and are never able to repent, ever poring upon their ſinnes, but never able to come out of them; they pray and pray againſt them, but their prayers moulder away under them: for they ſhall *pine away for their iniquities:* What is the reaſon? he ſheweth in the 13. verſe: *Becauſe I would have purged thee, and thou waſt not purged, thou ſhalt not be purged any more.* Becauſe I gave thee *line upon line, precept upon precept,* motion upon motion, Sacrament upon Sacrament, Sabbath upon Sabbath, and Ordinance upon Ordinance, becauſe I uſed all fair meanes and foul meanes, I awaked thy conſcience, and ſtirred up the motions of grace in thee; but becauſe I would have cleanſed thee, and thou waſt not cleanſed, thou ſhalt *never* be cleanſed. A fearfull ſentence it is, if mens hearts were ſoundly opened to conſider rightly of it.

And as there is a *perſonall* day, ſo there is a *nationall* day; if the Nation turne unto God during that time, then that nation ſhall find mercy; but if they neglect that day, then God will hide thoſe things from their eyes that belong to their peace, as Chriſt ſaith of Jeruſalem, *Luke* 19. 42. *O Jeruſalem, if that thou hadſt known in this thy day, thoſe things that did belong to thy peace! but now*

they

they are hid from thine eyes: in this *thy day*; if thou hadſt known it during *that day*, it had been happy for thee; but now the day of grace is gone, the Lord hath concealed it from thee, and thou ſhalt never perceive it any more.

Some mens day of grace God endeth even in their very *childhood*; therefore if there be any little ones, any children here in this congregation, that are of age to know what belongs unto an exhortation, to them I ſpeak, that they take heed how they rebell againſt the commandment of a father or a mother, or maſter, againſt the teaching of Gods Word, for though you be *children*, yet God may inflict judgements upon your heads; for not only the day of *grace*, but alſo the day of *life* may be cut off from children, as 2 *Kings* 2. 24. Four and twenty children were torn in peeces for mocking the Lords Prophet. Some mens day of grace is not ſhut up untill their *youth*, ſome not untill their old age, ſome not untill they are a *dying*; and if they refuſe then, they are alike, yea ſure to periſh for ever; I know the day of grace may have ſeveral returns, but at laſt Gods Exchequer will be finally ſhut up.

May not a man be called at the eleventh or twelfth hour of the day? The day of grace laſteth alwayes; and doth not the Apoſtle call the day of *life* the day of *grace*? 2 *Cor.* 6.2. *Object.*

Is it true, *the Lord calleth men at the eleventh and twelfth hour*; but *yet*, look and you ſhall ſee in the twentieth of *Matthew*, that they were *Anſw.*

were not called at the first houre, nor at the second nor third houre, nor at the sixth and ninth houre, *i.* he doth not say he found the *same* men that he found at the first, and third, sixth and ninth houres, but he saw *others* standing idle: No, those that were *called* at the first houre, *came* in at the first houre; and they that were called at the third houre, came in at the third houre; and they that were called at the sixth and ninth houre, came in at the sixth and ninth houre. Well, doth God call thee in thy childhood, in thy youth, or in thy middle age, now at the first or sixth, or ninth houre, *now* come in and labour in Gods Vineyard, *and worke out your salvation with feare and trembling*, and make use of the season of grace, now whiles it is upon you: for if *thou* be called the *first* houre, the *sixth* is for *another*, and not for thee; if thou be called the sixth houre, the *ninth* houre is for others and not for thee; if thou be called the ninth houre, the *eleventh* houre is for others and not for thee; The Text saith, *He came and found others standing idle in the market place, and said unto them, Why stand yee here idle? And they say unto him, No man hath hired us*; as if they should say, We never had any means of salvation, we have had no Ministers to preach unto us; but *now* God calls upon *thee* to come in, *this is thy houre*, look unto it. If God call thee, see thou come in, whether it be at the first or third houre, at the six or ninth houre, lest the Lord in his wrath clap hardnesse of heart upon thy soul.

But you will ſay, *that the day of life*, and the *day of grace are parallel'd and likened one to another; and therefore there is hope ſo long as a man remaines in the Congregation of the living.* *Object.*

I anſwer, it is true indeed, that *the day of grace laſteth ſo long as the day of life*: 1. *In regard of others*, for others are ſo to eſteeme of it, the Miniſter is to look to his people, as to a people *to be converted* as long as they live. *Anſw.*

2. *In regard of a mans owne ſelfe, he is ſo bound to beleeve*, for the commandment of faith ſtandeth in force on a man, ſo long as he liveth, and therefore infidelity and deſpaire ceaſe not to be ſins, till a man is *actually* in hell; when he is in hell, then they are no ſins, becauſe then he is not commanded to beleeve, but are part of the *puniſhment* of the damned; but whilſt a man lives it is a *ſinne*, for men are now bound to lay hold upon Chriſt and to beleeve, at what houre of their life ſoever.

3. It may be ſaid to laſt all a mans life long, *becauſe it is bounded within the compaſſe of life*: for no man hath a day of grace after this life.

But what is the meaning of all thoſe Scriptures which ſhow how God doth *deliver up men* unto the *Spirit of giddineſſe*, and unto the *Spirit of ſlumber*? *And* what means the *hardning of mens hearts, and ſearing of mens conſciences*, but only to ſhow that the day of grace may end unto a *particular* man, ten, twenty, thirty, nay forty yeeres before his death.

The

1. Becauſe *God may harden a mans heart, Jerem.* 13. 10. and deale with them as with Iſrael in the Rock, ſo ſhut up their hearts, that they ſhall never melt at any Sermon, never be wrought upon by any judgement, God having cloſed them up in a rocky heart, that he ſaith of them, *Can the Blackmore change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may they do good that are accuſtomed to do evill.* The blackneſſe of the Blackmore is only in the out-ſide of the skin, yet all the Art under the heavens cannot blot it out: So if once hardneſſe *poſſeſſe* thy ſoule, all the preaching of the Miniſters, and all the means of grace in the world can never bring it unto that frame and temper, as to make it melt under the hand of God; I tell thee, thou that uſeſt to come unto Sermons day after day, and refuſeſt to repent, living ſtill in thy ſinnes, there is no hammer nor beetle in the world more hard then thy heart: as thoſe men and women that ſit under the preaching of the Word, and hear the doctrine of life, like raine from above, beating and knocking on their conſciences, and on their hearts, to awaken them out of their ſinnes, and yet notwithſtanding will not repent at laſt, they prove to be *deafe Adders*, that ſtop their eares againſt the Word, charme the Charmer never ſo wiſely.

2. *God may ſeare mens conſciences*; Doth thy conſcience tell thee that thou art a lukewarmling, and wilt thou not be reformed? Doth thy conſcience tell thee that thy prayers and all thy

thy religion is rotten and unſound, and that thy repentance is hypocriticall and naught; and that for all thy vaine hopes, thou art but a diſſembler, and yet remaineſt in thy ſinnes, and wilt thou not be bettered hereby? Take heed; for that man that runns on in ſinne againſt the voice of his own conſcience, that man ſinnes the ſinne of *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 13. 8. God bid him ſtay ſeven dayes untill *Samuel* came: *Saul* ſtayes full *ſeven dayes* within *one houre*; at laſt his luſt began to bawl: What? ſhall I ſtay for a Prophet thus long? Stay, ſayes his conſcience; Why? (ſayes *Saul*) I waited for him ſo long, even ſeven dayes lacking but one houre. Stay (ſaith God to his conſcience) for the Word of God bids thee ſtay ſo long: he ſtayed one day, and two dayes, and ſix dayes, and ſeven dayes but one houre; Stay (ſaith his *conſcience*:) no, hee would not; but *I forced my ſelfe*, (ſaith the Text) as if hee ſhould ſay, I hardened my heart to do it, though the word of the Lord, & my own conſcience bid me ſtay and not do it, yet I *forced my ſelfe* to do it: What was this mans ſinne! Was it his offering of Sacrifice, and calling upon God by prayer? No, the Lord commands us to call upon him in time of diſtreſſe; and being commanded, it was lawfull. Was it his ſinne to meddle with the Prieſts office? No: for he did but appoint the Sacrifice, the Prieſt offered it. What? was it the breaking of one houres time? No: for he had ſinned more againſt God then ſo: but this was his ſinne, that *he went againſt his own conſcience*,

science, when God stood in the way, when conscience stood in the way; conscience said stay, but he would not stay: God bid him stay, but he would not stay. And this is the sinne of many thousands amongsts us; mens *consciences* tel them that they must not be *drunkards*, mens consciences tell them that they must not be *worldlings*, they must not be *swearers*, they must not be *lukewarme* professors, they must *pray better* then they do, and have *other faith* then yet they have, if ever they meane to be saved; wilt thou yet against thy conscience force thy selfe to go on in thy sins from day to day, and never be reformed? take heed lest the Lord be provoked to set thy sun upon thy head, and shut up thy heart, and conclude thy eternall destruction.

Object. *Suppose I go on in my sinnes, and follow my wicked courses now; what if I seek him hereafter, and humble my soule before him with fasting and prayer, and when I lie upon my death-bed, I send a ticket unto my Minister to pray for me, will all this do me no good?*

Answ. Surely no, (saith God, *Jerem.* 15. 1.) *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my affections could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight.* Dost thou lie sick upon thy death-bed? were *Samuel*, *Job*, or *Daniel* the Minister of thy Parish, and thou shouldst send thy ticket unto them, desiring them to remember thee in their prayers; if *Noah* stood in the Pulpit, and *Job* and *Daniel* were here before the Lord for to plead for thee, yet he would not hear thee.

But

But, *suppose I humble my self by fasting and prayer, will not God hear that.* *Object.*

No if thou neglect the day of grace. *Jer.* 14. 12. *when they fast. I will not hear them: and when they offer oblations, I will not accept their cry: but I will consume them by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.* You may set up your fastings, prayers, and humiliations, you may lament and mourne, and pine away your selves in your sins; but it is not *all your prayers and fastings*, it is not all your *lamentation and mourning*, that will do you good, so long as the *counsell* of the Lord is rejected. *Because I called, and ye would not answer;* therefore *you shall call, but I will not hear*: they thought that the Lords eares would alwayes be open, and that when they called the Lord would have answered, and that the day of grace would ever remain; but God saith, *I will not hear* them: they would never have sought if they thought the Lord would not hear them, but all their seeking was in vain. *Answ.*

You will say, at what time so ever a sinner repenteth he shall have mercy. *Object.*

It is true, if thou *repent from the bottome of thy heart*, but thou maiest come with many a degree of repentance, and yet never repent whilest thou livest: if thou repent from thy heart, and root out thy sins, then God will put away thy sins; but thou maiest go on in repentance and calling upon God, and performing *many* duties of Religion, and yet be hardned; look how much Religion will stand with *self-love*, so much thou *Answ.*

maiest have after the day of grace is *gone*. Selfe-love may make a man flie to prayer, and run after Sermons, and go on in many holy duties, and give over many sins; look how far self-love may drive thee unto *holy* duties, so far thou maist go, and *yet* notwithstanding remaine hardned. O therefore let us not delay, not put off the time of grace, not let go salvation while it may be had; *then* shall they call, but I will not answer: he doth not set down *when* this time is; it may be it is *now*, it may be not this seven yeers, it may be not till thy death.

Doct. 2. Doctr. *It may be, this very day, even this very Sermon, this very houre may be thy day that art now in thy sinnes, that if thou repent not at this very one Sermon, thou neglectest eternall life for ever*; lose the benefit of *this* Sermon at *this* time, and thou maiest lose eternall salvation, and never have it more. The thiefe that robd this day, how doth he know but this one robbery may bring him to the gallows? So the man that sins this day, how doth he know but that *this* very dayes work may bring him to hell? *Deut.* 32. 35. *To God belongs vengeance: their feete shall slide in due time.* Therefore if a man sin against him, he may stand to day, and to morrow, and many dayes; but when the *due time* comes, even the time which God hath set, then up goes his heels, he shall slide and break his neck: thy houre-glasse runs in *heaven*, and thou seest not *when* the sand comes to the bottome, but when tis out, then down thou goest to hell for ever.

There

There was one resolved to kill *Julius Cæsar* such a day; the night before, a friend sent him a letter to acquaint him with it: but being at supper, and busie, I will not look upon it now, (saith he) to morrow is a new day. The next day when he should have read his letter, he was stabd; Whence this Proverb came in *Greece*, *To morrow is a new day.* God sends thee a letter and a message from heaven *to day*; hear his voice *to day*, repent and come out of your sins, or for ever to hell; to day be converted and sanctified, or for ever be hardned. Dost thou refuse to *hearken to day*, and putrest it off untill to morrow? it may be to morrow may be a day of Gods wrath, and then thou maiest be hardned, seared, and bound over unto the great day of Gods vengeance; to morrow God may set the decree upon thy soul, that thou shalt never repent. Therefore if thou refuse *this*, thou refusest all; for what knowest thou, but this very day may be *thy* day?

The reason is, because *Gods patience is in his own breast*; and who can tell how long it will last? Hast thou *Momus* his glasse-window, to look into Gods secret counsell? hast thou a key-hole to look into Gods treasurie? canst thou stand on tiptoe, to look over Gods shoulder, to look into Gods *decree*, to see *how long his* patience will last? It may be God hath suffered thee till this day, thou art guilty of ten thousand sinnes, and yet he is patient towards thee; God hath stayed thus long for thee, that hast sworne *Reas.* 1.

I know not how many oaths, God hath born thus long with thee that hast told I know not how many lies, prophaned I know not how many Sabbaths contemned I know not how many ordinances, and sleighted I know not how many judgements, yet Gods *patience* is in his own breſt, it is the *long ſufferance of God.* Thou mayeſt ſay, I would fain have it to morrow, and this ſeven yeers, but alas, it is *his* long ſufferance and not *thine*: and how doſt thou know when he will conclude it? it may be this day as well as to morrow. *Joel* 2. 13. *Rent your hearts, and not your garments,* (ſaith the Prophet) *for the Lord he is gracious, and mercifull.* This word [*for*] hath a great deal of force in it: *Firſt*, It is *a deſcriptivum* [*for*:] for he is gracious and a mercifull God: therefore rent thy heart, and let thy ſoul burſt within thee, that thou haſt ſinned againſt him: for he is a mercifull God, and it may be he will pardon all thy ſins, and heal all thy rebellions committed againſt him.

Secondly, it is *an upbraiding* [*for*:] upbraiding thee for thy ſins: rent thy heart therefore, why? he is a patient God; wilt thou goe on in thy ſins againſt ſuch a *patient* God? and rebel againſt ſuch a loving Father, that hath loved thee with ſo much compaſſion? Rent thy heart, for he is patient.

Thirdly, it is a *comforting and incouraging* [*for*:] rent thy heart for there is incouragement for thee to repent, give over thy ſins, and go to the throne of grace. For there is much mercie

mercie to welcome thee, and great patience for to bid thee come home, and abundance of grace for to incourage thee; therefore rent thy heart and come home unto the Lord, for he is patient and long-suffering.

Fourthly, it is a *forewarning* [*for*:] rent your hearts, for the Lord is gracious and mercifull, slow to anger, and of great kindnesse; yet his mercie lasteth, *yet* his patience endureth, yet hee hath all his attributes, and yet he is pleased to manifest the same, still tendring grace and mercie unto thee. Oh turn unto him, while these endure, or else thou shalt perish for ever.

Fifthly, it is a *threatning* [*for*;] now he is gracious, now he is mercifull, but his mercy will end, his patience will end, and then if thou hast not *rent* thy heart before, it will be too late then. Therefore as ever thou lovest thine own soule, now rent thy heart and turn unto God.

It is Gods own proclamation; *The Lord the Lord, slow to anger, and of great mercie, forgiving iniquity and sin.* Yea what man soever it be, that humbles his soule before him he shall find grace and mercie with him; yea abundance of mercie, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sinne; yea any thing: Let but a soul come prostrate before him, humbling his soule, he will pardon his sin. But as it followeth in the words; *He will by no means clear the guiltie*; if notwithstanding all Gods patience and mercie, thou go on in thy sins, the Lord will never forgive thee, but will visit thy sinnes upon thee unto the third and

fourth generations, because thou hast withstood the day of grace. Beloved, men run on in their sins, as if to be an Angel from heaven should cry unto them and tell them, yet God will be good unto them, yet God will show them mercie, and forbear them. Beloved, let your consciences answer, if you ever heard the Lord God say to any of you, thus long I will forbear you. No, Gods patience is in his own breast, and therefore no man knows how long it will last.

Reas. 3. A second reason is, *because Gods patience giveth no marks or inklings of it, before it ends*: commonly when God strikes a man with death, he giveth some signes of warnings of it before, as sickness, and pains, and gray hairs, and many sorrowes, &c. Now because thy life is in Gods hands, thou carest not for it, but venturest to go on in thy sinnes, hoping to have some warning, though thousands be cut off without it; but the day of grace may come to an *end*, and yet thou never have any inkling or *warning* of it beforehand: commonly when God strikes a man with death, he tells him of it before-hand by aches and pains, as if the Lord should say, Now thou shalt die, now will I take thee out of the world. But when the Lord taketh away the day of grace from a man, though the spirituall man may take some notice of it, yet there is no sensible apparition of it, but after the day of grace is set upon a man, he may be as strong and lustie as before, he may come to Church as well after as before, performe religious duties, and do many good

thing

things, as well after as before; as *Saul* went on in duties of Religion, as well after *Samuel* had pronounced the Lords doome upon him; how many times was he offering sacrifice unto the Lord after the Prophet told him, that he was a man *rejected?* how many good speeches came from him? as when *Samuel* met him, he salutes him with these words; *Blessed be thou of the Lord, I pray thee turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord.* A man would have thought that *Saul* had been a good convert. No, no, before all this his judgement and doome was set upon him; God steals upon him and saies nothing; he claps his plague upon their souls, and holds his peace.

Isa. 42. 14. *I have a long time held my peace, I have been still, and refrained my selfe; now will I cry like a travelling woman, I will destroy, and devoure at once.* The Lord shews here how he deals with men, they go on in their sins, but the Lord holds his peace; they provoke him every day, but the Lord refraines his anger: but now all at once his wrath breaketh forth upon them. *Psal.* 64. 7. *God will shoot an arrow at them suddenly,* their stroke shall be at once. The Lord suddenly shoots a swift arrow at thee; no sooner it is shot, but it enters into thy bowels. When the Lord comes upon a man; he comes suddenly; when he ends the day of grace upon him, he doth it suddenly. He ended the day of grace on the Scribes and Pharisees even in the very Sermon time, while Christ was preaching unto them, they were de-

livered up to hardneſſe of heart: ſo many were delivered up to hardneſſe of heart in the time of *Hoſea's* prophecie, *Hoſ.* 4. 17. *Ephraim is joyned to idols; let him alone:* (ſaith God,) as if he ſhould ſay, Sermon, let him alone; Preacher, let him alone; Sirrit, let him alone; Chriſt, let him alone; Beloved, if we ſtand out againſt God, and reject the *day* of grace, the Lord may ſay. Word, let ſuch a man alone, and never convert him; Chriſt, let ſuch a man alone, and never redeem him; Spirit, let ſuch a man alone, and never ſanctifie him; Sacraments, let ſuch a man alone, and never ſeal up any comforts unto him: a fearfull ſigne that men are come to this houre, do we not ſee that men come to the Word, and the Word lets them alone in their ſins? do not men come to the Sacrament, and the Sacrament leaves them ſtill in their filthineſſe? men come unto good duties, but good duties let them alone, and do them no good: and this is the condition of many thouſands in the world. Therefore oh think upon this you that have made a league with your ſins, and an agreement with hell: hear this delivered to you this day, that the day of grace may be ended, and God may come and clap his curſe upon men, and never give them any inkling of it at all.

Reaſ. 3. A third reaſon is, becauſe *God reckons upon every houre*, if God kept not a ſtrict account of time, how many Sermons you have had, how many mercies you have injoyed, how many croſſes he hath warned you by: if God kept not a tru:

true tale and account of every houres time; you might rub on many dayes, and moneths, and yeers, and spend much time in fulfilling of your lusts; but God keepeth a reckoning of these things, yea of every houre, and of every minute. *Acts* 17. 30. *The times of ignorance God regarded not; but now he admonisheth all men to repent.* Alas, when men live in their sins through blindnesse and ignorance, and know not God, the Lord takes no such strict notice of them, but lets them go on longer and longer; but when the Lord sends them his Word and Gospel, and affords them the means of grace, he doth the more strictly look unto them, and takes the more exact account of them; before they had the means of grace, the Lord *winked* at them, and did not so narrowly watch them: but looked over mens igonrance, (as the originall hath it) but now God sends his Word and Gospel, he *admonisheth all men to repent*, he winks at never an houre, but sets down how oft thou hast had exhortation from thy Minister, how often thou hast had warning by sicknesse and afflictions, how often thou hast had checks from thine owne conscience, how many admonitions thou hast had from thy friends, how many times thou hast had the sound of the Gospel to sound in thy eares to bring thee home unto God, *John* 2. 7. 11. *This is the first beginning of miracles that Jesus did. John* 4. 58. *This is the second miracle that Jesus did*, saith the Text, God sets down this, is the first, this is the second time; *This is the second Epistle I wrote to*

you

you, saith *Paul*. Oh this is *the third time* I wrote unto you, 2 *Cor.* 13. that when I come I will not spare: so God sets it downe in his catalogue, this is the first time that I have warned this man, this is the second time, this is the third time, that when I come I will not spare; the Lord accounts how long he hath sought unto thee, and intreated thee by his mercies, how long he hath allured thee by his word, how long he hath warned thee by his judgements, how oft he hath smote thy heart with fears, and thy conscience with terrors. Now if for all this thou wilt not return, just is it with God to cast thee down to hell for ever.

Reas. 4. The fourth Reason, and last: *it is a wonder that the day of grace is not ended already, and that thou art not now in hell.* When a thing in this kind is looked for to be done, it is a wonder that it is not done: It is a wonderfull mercie of God unto this Kingdome that *yet* the day of grace is continued amongst us, in regard of our long fear and expectation of the contrary. For from the highest to the lowest we have highly revolted more and more, & provoked God to his very face. What contempt of Gods word? what neglect of Gods Ordinances? what prophanation of Gods Sabbaths? what scoffing and deriding of Gods servants? how doth wickednesse and prophanesse stand up in the highest roome, climb up into the highest chambers? But as a whore condemned to die being with child, is repreived for a time, untill her child be brought forth: so this

Land

Land hath gone a whoring from God, yet so long as God hath some children to be brought forth, which are not yet come unto the birth, he lets his grace and Gospel continue untill these children be brought forth. Therefore now (beloved) if we stick at the birth and come not forth, a hundred to one but we shall miscarry.

When Christ comes first to thy soule, he witnesseth grace and mercy to thee, if thou wilt repent and amend; yea he witnesseth forgivenesse of sins, redemption and salvation, if thou wilt beleeve; but if not, he will be a *swift witnesse against thee*, Malachi 3. 5. if thou continue and goest on in thy sins: *Agree with thine adversary, whilt thou art in the way quickly*, Matth. 5. 25. Now God is in the *way* with thee, Christ and his Spirit are in the way with thee; thou needest not now say, *who shall go up to heaven and bring downe the Spirit* to thee; Christs Spirit is now knocking at thy heart, and now God offers his mercy to thee, now thou art in the way, now he calls unto thee to accept of his mercie, now hee commands thee to take Christ, now hear him calling to thy heart, now he tenders grace unto thee, imbrace it: now receive Christ and make up thy peace with him: remember the saying of the Apostle, 2 *Corinth.* 13. 5. *Examine your selves whether you be in the faith; prove your selves. Know you not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you except you be reprobates?* As if the Apostle should say, I have been an Apostle to you this yeer and half, I have preached thus and thus long unto

unto you, I have wrote one Epiſtle to you to reforme thoſe abuſes that were among you, and now I write this ſecond Epiſtle, to declare the whole will and counſell of God to you. Now caſt up your reckoning, examine your ſelves, and make up your account: ſee if you have gained Chriſt. O, I have Chriſt, (ſaith one) I have Chriſt, (ſaith another.) I, but *prove it*, ſaith the Apoſtle, and try your ſelves: know ye not that by this time *Chriſt is in you*, or elſe you be *reprobates?* As if he ſhould ſay, if yet Chriſt be not in you, and grace wrought in your hearts, if yet you lie feſtring in your ſins, and go on in your wicked wayes, it is to be feared you are reprobates: either you or we are reprobates, you for not obeying, or wee for not delivering the truth of God unto you: *But I truſt that ye ſhall know that we are not reprobates*: verſe 6. God forbid that this word ſhould be ever ſpoken unto any ſoule in this Congregation: but this let mee ſay, is there any man here that goes on in his luſts, and in his carnall courſe of life, in pride, ſecurity, hardneſſe of heart, and impenitencie, that hath not the ſoundneſſe of grace? he hath a fearfull ſigne and brand of a reprobate, whoſe conſcience is ſtifled: it is a fearfull ſigne, if he be not a reprobate before God, yet he is one that is not *approved*, but for the preſent in a wretched and miſerable condition. *Now* is the time of grace wherein God hath ſpoken to your ſouls, remember that vengeance that is coming towards you if it be rejected; now the Lords fat-

lings

lings are ready; his Oxen, and Sheep are slain, and laid upon the board; Christ is sacrificed, and his blood is shed, and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is tendered to you; you that have grace, get more grace; you that have no grace, get grace and Christ, and take heed of neglecting *any* opportunity of grace, for that may come unto thee in one hour, that will never come againe.

FINIS.

VAIN THOUGHTS ARRAIGNED At the Barre of Gods JUSTICE.

SET FORTH

In a Sermon preached at *Linton* in *Kent*, Septem. 29. 1629.

By that Reverend and painfull Minister of the Word,

WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.
Sometime Fellow of *Pembroke Hall* in *Cambridge*, and late Parson of *Rochford* in *Essex*.

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A SERMON OF

Mr. WILLIAM FENNER

Preached at *Linton*, Septem. 9. 1629.

PHIL. 3. 18, 19.

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the Crosse of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose belly is their God, whose glory is their shame, and who mind earthly things.

THE Apostle in the closure of this Chapter, setteth out unto us a twofold kind of life: First, the life of the godly, and that 1. by way of Exhortation, verse 17. *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as you have us for an example*: 2. By way of declarati-

on, verſe 20. *But our converſation is in heaven, whence alſo we look for the Saviour, even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Then *ſecondly*, hee ſets forth unto us *the life of the wicked*, which walked otherwiſe then the Diſciples and Apoſtles of Chriſt walked, in theſe words read unto you. The Apoſtle warned thoſe wicked men again and again, but they would not take warning, neither did they think themſelves ſo bad as he made them, and therefore they thought they ſhould ſpeed well enough; he preached to them in the Pulpit, and wrote unto them, though he were ſix hundred miles and more diſtant from them, (and that *weeping* too) that they are *enemies to the Croſſe of Chriſt: whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe God is their belly, who mind earthly things.*

The words may be conſtrued two wayes; either as being meant, 1. *Of ſeverall wicked men*, as firſt of Heterodox walkers, ſuch as walk contrary to the Apoſtles: 2. *Of wicked perſecutors* of the Goſpel, enemies to the Croſſe of Chriſt: 3. Of *Drunkards and hypocrites, whoſe God is their belly*: 4. Of *Ambitious and proud perſons, whoſe glory is their ſhame*: and 5. *of covetous and carnall minded men, who mind earthly things*: or as *Chryſoſtom* expounds the words (and ſo it ſeems is the meaning of them) to be meant of *one ſort* of men, *who mind earthly things*, they are ſuch as walk otherwiſe then the Apoſtle walked. Who are they that *mind earthly things?* they are *enemies of the Croſſe of Chriſt*: Who are they that *mind earthly things*? Whoſe hearts

and

and affections run more after the things of this life, then after the crosse of Christ; Their *God is their belly.* Who are they that *mind earthly things*, and think only how to increase their living, and enlarge their estate, and make them sure unto themselves? their *glory is their shame.* Who are they that *mind earthly things*? that give their hearts (the flower of man) and their affections (the flower of their soules) unto the world, and unto the base things of the world. still they are they that mind earthly things, which set either their loving thoughts, or their carking and caring thoughts, or their fretting and vexing thoughts; or their eager, covetous, and vain thoughts on earthly things, they are they that walk otherwise then the Apostles of Christ walked; These are those that are *enemies to the crosse of Christ, whose God is their belly, whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things, whose end is destruction.*

Hence then will we observe this point:

That *those whose minds and hearts run habitually on earth and earthly things, their end must needs be destruction.* Doct.

Jerem. 6. 19. *Heare O earth,* (saith God *behold I will bring evill upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto me, but rejected my Law.* Wherein we may see 3 things, 1. That the curse of God is the desert of curled evill & vain thoughts: 2. That the plague and curse of God is the event of evill and vain thoughts; evill thoughts do not onely deserve

Gods plagues, but also bring them: 3. Here is notice given to all the world; *Heare, O earth*: as if he had said, here is a reckoning that you little dream of, I will bring a plague upon you not onely for your idolatry, for your whoredome and fornication, but even for your vaine thoughts, *Prov.* 24. 9. *The thoughts of the wicked are sinne*; the Lord doth not only condemne the actions and courses of wicked men, but sets his curse upon their very thoughts. Sinne is of an homogeneall nature, of which every part of a thing is the whole; every piece of stone is stone, for it hath the nature of the whole: even so it is with sin, the least part of sin, the least thought of sin, the least shiver of sin, is sin, and abominable before God.

Reas. 1. The reasons why those, whose hearts and thoughts run habitually on earth and earthly things, must needs end in destruction, are, 1. *That mans end must needs end in destruction, that never repents*: Now, so long as a mans thoughts runne usually and habitually on the things of the world, that man never repents; repentance not onely cleanseth the outside of man, but the inside also, even the heart; repentance goeth as farre as the *Law* of God goeth; where the word of God begins, there repentance must needs begin: now the word of God begins and strikes at the heart, as saith the Apostle, *The word of God is sharp and powerfull, sharper then any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the soule and spirit, the joynts and marrow, and is a discerner of*

of the thoughts of the heart, Heb. 4. 12. Now then if the word of God ſtrike at the *thoughts* of the heart, then repentance muſt goe and teach ſo farre to reforme and amend the things of the heart, or elſe he never repents. Let a man ſweep his houſe never ſo much, yet it is not clean ſo long as there remains one Cob-web in it: ſo if thy heart be ſwept from drunkenneſſe, whoring and ſwearing, and yet if the old Cob-web of vain thoughts remain in any corner of thy heart, not waſhed out, nor ſwept down, thou haſt not as yet repented: *Oh Jeruſalem* (ſaith God by his Prophet) *waſh thy heart from wickedneſſe, that thou maiſt be ſaved: how long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? Jer.* 4. 14. Mark how the Lord *inforceth* his exhortation: ſee how he backs his counſell, [*that thou maiſt be ſaved*:] as if he had ſaid, thou canſt not be ſaved, unleſſe thou waſh thy heart from vain thoughts: *how long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee*? He doth not ſay, why doe vain thoughts *come in* thee? for they will come into the beſt & moſt holy heart; but how long ſhall they *lodge* within thee? If but vain thoughts do lodge in man & take up their neſt in his heart, if a man let his thoughts *dwell* upon vain things, and hee give way unto them, and uſe them as his market, trade and recreations, hee cannot be ſaved; it is an *emphaticall* kind of ſpeech: as if the Lord ſhould ſay, *O Jeruſalem, thou never conſidereſt this*, and thus he doth as it were pity and compaſſionate them in their blindneſſe and ignorance, and

horrible beſottednesse, that think that thought is free. Beloved, when the Lord comes to reckon with the world, he will not only reckon with them for their pounds and ſhillings, for their hundreds and thouſands of ſinnes; for their murders, whoredomes, blaſphemies, &c. but he will call them to account for their leaſt ſinnes, the pence and farthing ſinnes, even their very thoughts: *agree with thine adverſary quickly, while thou art in the way, leſt he deliver thee up to the Jaylor, and thou be caſt into priſon: thou ſhalt not come out untill thou haſt paid the utmoſt farthing*; thou muſt deliver up thy farthing as well as thy pound ſinnes, or elſe thou never *agreeſt* with thine adverſary. When the Lord by his prophet calls upon his people, exhorting them to repentance, he willeth and exhorteth them to *change their thoughts*, Eſay 55.7. *Repentance* is the *change of the thoughts*, according to the Engliſh Proverb, (*I have changed my thoughts*:) *Look unto thy feet when thou goeſt into the houſe of God*, *Eccleſ.* 5.1. Thou canſt never go to the Houſe of God without thy *feet*: the thoughts and *affections* of the heart, are the feet of the ſoul; and thou canſt never go to God without them; and therefore if thy heart and affections run *habitually* on earthly things, thou didſt never *repent*, and ſo thine end is damnation.

Reaſ. 2. The ſecond reaſon is, *that mans end muſt needs be deſtruction that hath no Chriſt in the world*: now ſo long as thy thoughts run habitually on earthly things, thou haſt no Chriſt. It is not enough

nough for a man to hang on Christ, for many a man doth so, and yet is cut off from Christ, and perisheth for ever: thou must not onely hang upon Christ, but thou must also *get into* Christ. As in the old world, when the deluge came, and the waters increased so greatly, that the mountaines and high hils were covered with them, and the people could not save themselves by getting unto the tops of the mountains, no question but many seeing the *Ark* swim above the water, did climb up and hang upon the sides of the Ark, thinking to save themselves, yet *none* of them were saved, but those that were gotten *into* the Ark: so many a man will catch hold of Christ, but his hold will be gone, and he perish for ever, unlesse he get *into* Christ. Now a man can never get *into* Christ, unlesse his heart bee purged from vaine thoughts: For Christ when he entreth into a man, cleanseth his heart from vain thoughts, 2 *Cor.* 10, 5. If Christ once come into the heart, he will set up his throne there: he will hold up his Scepter of Righteousnesse in it: when Christ cometh, see what a work hee will make in the heart, he will not suffer a proud thought to remain there to upbraid him: he will not suffer ever a sinfull lust to stand up to beard him; but he will *cast down every imagination, and all high things that exalt themselves, and he will bring every thought into subjection unto himself.* Therefore if thy thoughts run after the lusts of thy owne heart, thou hast no Christ in thee: for Christ (beloved) will never dwell in a foule house: I

know there is no wheat without some darnell, no gold without some drosse, no wine without some lees; so there is no man but hath *some* sin; no man so clean, but hath some defilements of sin upon him; therefore if a man have not his cleansing *grace* of Christ in him, cleansing the heart from vain things, there is no Christ in him: for Christ will never dwell in a foule heart. Now beloved, the very vain thoughts of a man *defile* him: as Christ saith, *Matth.* 7. 21, 22, 23. *Out of the heart proceedeth evill thoughts, and they are they that defile a man.* All these, not onely *murder, and adulteries, and uncleannesses*, and all other abominable sins, which mens consciences startle at, but *evill thoughts* defile a man: Assure thy self that so long as the league of these evill thoughts is not broken, thou hast no Christ *as yet* within thee. Hence is that exhortation of the Apostle, *Colos.* 3. 12. *If you be risen with Christ, then seek those things which are above.*

Brethren, you must remember that there be *two kinds of exhortations* in Scripture; the one, *if a man do them, blessed and happie is he*: the other, *if he doe them not, yet he may find mercie*; it will be a greif and a sorrow to him, but it follows not that he shall miscarrie. But there are exhortations that tye to obedience, that must be obeyed: or else there is no salvation, as this exhortation of the Apostle; it is not left to our choice to do or not to do, but *if a man be risen with Christ*, he must doe it: he must *seek the things that are above*: that man then that hath his thoughts

thoughts run habitually on the world, that man hath no Christ in him, and therefore his end must needs be destruction.

Thirdly, *that mans end must needs be destruction that loves not God*; now so long as thy thoughts run habitually on the things of the world, thou hast no true love of God in thee. For thus runs the Commandment of love, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* Matth. 22. 37. It is as if Christ should have said, thou shalt love God *with all thy heart, and with all thy heart, and with all thy heart*: for the *soul, mind,* and *heart* are all one, that no man might dare to keep any part of their heart from God. Every one will say, I love God with all my heart, I go to Church and serve God with all my heart: I hear the Word, and pray with all my heart: I receive the Sacraments with all my heart: Dost thou so? and yet let thy thoughts *run* upon the world? dost thou pray, and yet let vain thoughts lodge within thee? dost thou hear the Word, receive the Sacraments, and yet letst vain thonghts *distract* thee? Dost thou walk in thy calling, and yet letteſt vain thoughts steal away thy heart, and yet sayest thou, I love God with all my heart, when thou takest away thy heart from God? How dost thou think thy thoughts? with thy heels, or with thy heart? Surely thou sayest, with my heart: Why then if thou lovest God with all thy heart, thou must give thy thoughts unto God; God that cals for thy heart, cals for all the heart: now the

Reas. 3.

the heart is nothing but all a mans heart; all the affections and desires, all turnings and windings, all things that are in the heart do but make up the heart: and therefore when God calls for thy heart, he calls for all the powers and faculties of the soule. And therefore the Prophet *David* would blesse God *with his soule, and all that was within him.* Psal. 103. So thou must give thy thoughts, and all that is within thee to God, or else thou giveſt God nothing; therefore that mans end must needs be destruction that loves not God.

Reas. 4. Fourthly, *that mans end must needs be destruction, that never gives over his sinnes*: and so long as thy thoughts run after the world, thou canst never forsake sin: thou maiest resolve and think on the contrary, yet so long as thy thoughts run habitually on the things of the world, thou dost not forsake sin. Wicked and carnall men may have the eyes of their consciences opened, and their hearts awakened, whereby they may see their sinnes, and the hellish evill and danger of them: whereupon they may resolve and purpose to forsake them, and then they will make a covenant with God that they will not do thus and thus; I have been touchie and cholerick, but I will be so no more; I have beene a prophane swearer and blasphemer of the name of God, but I will be so no more; I have been a drunkard, and an unclean person, but Lord thou shalt see a reformation in me. Nay it may be he will tell his Minister of it, and his father and his mother, his

his wife, his children, and all his friends too of it: but when he comes to his cold bloud again, and these cold graces which fluttered so, come to be cold in him, so that his heart comes to it self again, then vain thoughts rest in his heart, and he returns to his old sins again, as the dog to his vomit, and the sow being washed, to the wallowing in the mire.

The Apostle excellently describes a man that can never depart from his sins: *They have eyes full of adultery, which cannot cease to sin*: 2. *Pet*, 2.14. where the Apostle speaks not onely of that adulterie which is a breach of the seventh Commandment; but of such an adulterie which is a perfect breach of *every* Commandment, when the heart runneth awhoring after every sin and vanitie: when the eye of the soul is full of adulterie, the heart cannot cease to sin; when the eye cannot see an object of gain or profit, but the mind is presently engaged and runs after it, when it cannot see an object of delight and pleasure, but it is straightway caught by it: when he cannot see any wrong or injurie done unto him, but presently he is inflamed with revenge, and his heart runs after it: I say that if thy eye be thus full of adultery that thou canst not see the occasions and hints of sin, but presently thou art insnared, and thy soul is taken by it; thou art the man that canst not cease to sin: therefore untill thou turne the eye of thy soule, which is the thoughts and affections of thy heart, another way, thou wilt never cease to sin. For whereso-

ever

ever thou lookeſt, thou wilt be inſnared, ſo long as thy thoughts are evill and vicious; either upon pride, or covetouſneſſe, or ambition, or envie, or delights; thy ſoul will look aſquint on God: and untill theſe vaine thoughts of thine be crucified, thou wilt only look upon the ſatisfying of theſe vain luſts of thine.

Prov. 3. 6. *In all thy wayes acknowledge God, and he ſhall direct thy paths.* In all thy wayes think on God, or elſe thou mayeſt go to many duties in Religion, but never be direct in thy going; thou maieſt pray a thouſand times, but never be eſtabliſhed in thy prayer: thou maieſt go from Lecture to Lecture, and yet never be eſtabliſhed in thy ſervice: thou maieſt go about many things and never be eſtabliſhed in any thing, unleſſe God be in all thy thoughts: a man may go on in a courſe of Religion, but it is at haphazard, he is inconſtant, and unſteady in his courſe, unleſſe in his heart he think upon God; and therefore his end muſt needs be deſtruction.

This then may ſerve, firſt, for *humiliation* to the godly: ſecondly, *for matter of condemnation* to the wicked.

Vſe 1. First, for *humiliation*; are vain thoughts thus damnable, that when they beare ſway in the heart, they make that mans end to be deſtruction? How then ought this to fill the faces of them that have the Spirit of Chriſt, with ſhame and confuſion, and to make them in a holy manner to be confounded of themſelves, and to think of the emptineſſe, naughtineſſe, and vani-

ties

ties of their hearts? Beloved, thou canſt not go to prayers, but abundance of vain thoughts will be about thee, like waſps to aſſault thee; thou canſt not go to the Word, but theſe vaine thoughts will be a humming in thy eares; thou canſt not go about the works in thy calling, but vain thoughts will haunt thee, and creep into thy meditations, and take away the main burthen of the work all the day long. Beloved, this ſhould make a godly man aſhamed, and confounded in himſelf in the conſideration hereof. The Prophet *David* was ſo confounded and aſhamed hereat, that had not God poured in mercie and comfort into his ſoul, he had been diſtracted, and ſhould have deſpaired, conſidering the company of vain thoughts that lodged within him, *Pſal.* 94. 19. where hee ſhows what abundance of diſtracting thoughts he had; that if God had not ſuſtained him with comfort after comfort, he had even been been overwhelmed in deſpair by them.

Auguſtine ſaith, a mans thoughts are not in his own power: the heart of man is like tinder; and if the Devill caſt a ſpark into it, thou canſt not hinder it from *taking fire*; but thou maieſt hinder it from burning further. A ſhip may have leakes in her, and thou canſt not hinder the coming in of water into her: but by thy pumping and induſtry thou maieſt ſave her from drowning in the water; even ſo evill thoughts, though they be rooted out, yet they will come in again; A mans heart is like to the fig-tree that grew out of the ſtone wall, which *Epiphanius* ſpeaketh

ſpeaketh of; the branches were lopt off, and it grew again; the boughs were lopt off, and it grew again; they cut down the body of it, yet it grew again: they pluckt up the roots of it, yet it grew again: till at laſt the ſtone wall and all was fain to be pulled down: Even ſo it is with vaine thoughts in the heart; a man may lop them off by *godly ſorrow*; he may cut them down, and root them up by *mortification*, and yet they will be ſprouting up, and riſing up again; till the whole body of ſin be pulled down, and deſtroyed in a man. *Gregory* ſpeaks of them, and ſaith, man may pluck them up, but yet not ſo but that they will riſe again.

The conſideration hereof ſhould humble us, and make us lowe in our own eyes: Oh then think with thy ſelf and ſay, Oh that my thoughts ſhould be ſo baſe, earthly and vain! what, have I not a God, a Chriſt, a heaven to think upon? have I not excellent Commandments of my God, and thouſands of ſweet and precious promiſes in Scripture to think upon? and muſt I be thinking on every bable? of every ſtraw, not worth the thinking on? Take the Apoſtles exhortation, *Whatſoever things be true, whatſoever things are honeſt, whatſoever things are juſt, whatſoever things are pure, whatſoever things are of good report: if there be any vertue, if there be any praiſe, think on theſe things*: Phil. 4. 8. What, are there ſo many vertuous things; ſo many holy and pure things; ſo many admirable and glorious things: ſo many heavenly graces, and divine promiſes;

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ſo many bleſſed paſſages of holy Writ to take up my mind? and ſhall I ſpend my thoughts and time upon ſuch vaine and curſed things as wil yeeld me no profit? This ſhould aſtoniſh the hearts of Gods people, and greatly humble their ſouls.

The ſecond Uſe may ſerve for *matter of condemnation* unto the wicked: let this doctrine ſtrike terrour into the hearts of thoſe men, that ſuffer their hearts to be taken up with vaine thoughts: as *Peter* ſaid unto *Simon Magus*, ſo let me ſay unto them, *Repent of this thy wickedneſſe, and pray unto God* (verſ. 8.) *that if it be poſſible, the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee.* The Apoſtle doth not onely wiſh him to repent of his ſimony and briberie, but alſo of the leaſt vain thoughts of his heart: pray unto God, if perhaps the very thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee: for beloved the very leaſt vaine thoughts that thou thinkeſt, without repentance is impardonable: there is an impoſſibility of remiſſion of vain and idle thoughts without true repentance. *Uſe 2.*

Oh what fearfull news is this to the world that lay not this to heart! Beloved, may we not now run into the eares and hearts of all earthly men with this point, whoſe minds and thoughts are earthly? Is it ſo that he whoſe thoughts run *habitually* on the world, his end is deſtruction? Then they that make *no conſcience* what their thoughts are, what their imaginations are, what they think of as they goe up and down, how can

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such etcape the vengeance of hell? Tell me then what thy thoughts are; are they not of thy hawks and hounds, of thy cattell and grounds, of thy gardens and orchards, rather then of Christ? When thou walkest in the streets, whereon run thy thoughts, but on thy pleasures, and profits, and earthly delights? yea of every vanity, and every delight canst thou think, rather then of God and his Commandments. Thou comest to Church, thou prayest, and hearest the Word of God; but do not vain thoughts come along with thee? thou goest home again, but do not vaine thoughts haunt and dog thee?

It is the brand of a wicked man, *not to have God in all his thoughts*, Psal. 4. 10. when goods and cattell, plough and cart, pleasures and outward contentments are in his mind and thoughts; when ruffs and cuffs, houses and dishes, tables and faire hangings, or any thing but God can take up their thoughts; they can have thoughts of every thing, but of God they can think none; this is the brand of a wicked man, that he hath no bloud of a Christian in him.

It is a true description of a Pagan and Infidel, that hath no knowledge of Christ, *to be vain in his imaginations*, Rom. 1. 21. *When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations*: vaine in their disputes, vain in their reasonings, vain in their thoughts; in their carriages and disputations; so then though thou knowest God, and hast things enough in thy mind, that convinceth thee that this

this God is to be worshipped; and understandest the worship of God, and the commandments of Christ: yet if thou glorifiest him not as God, giving thy heart and affections to him, but art vain in thy imaginations, thou dishonourest God. Hear what God saith unto such, *All the day long have I stretched out my hand unto a rebellious and gain-saying people, which walk in a way that is not good, but after their own thoughts, a people that provoke me continually to my face.* Isa. 65. 2, 3. As if God had said, I sent Prophet after Prophet, Minister after Minister, to instruct them in the knowledge of my wayes, I laboured to convert them, and to bring them home unto my self, and to work better thoughts in them; but still they are a people that *walk after their own thoughts*, that *provoke me continually unto my face.* There is never a thought of thine, but it is in the verie face of God, both thought and imagined.

But some man may say, I think of God and of Christ, of faith and repentance, and of calling on God, of mending of this and that course; I think of death, and of my last account and every foot I have holy thoughts in my mind.

But beloved, give me leave, I pray you, for to speak something unto you, which, it may be, may stick by you while you live: I will propound these *foure* things and distinctions unto you, which I will use.

First, *what doest thou think of God and of heaven? then tell me whether thy thoughts be injective thoughts into thy heart, or thoughts*

raised by thy heart; for there is a great deale of difference betweene thoughts *injected* and thoughts *raised*: God casts good thoughts into a godly mans heart, which being fit soyl, it fructifies, and brings forth fruit. Again, God casts good thoughts into a wicked mans heart, but because his heart is not sanctified, and therefore no fit soyl to harbour in, they die and vanish: God casts in, and they cast out: God casts in again, and they cast out again: therefore if thou hast good thoughts, examine and try whether they be thoughts raised from thy heart or no; see whether thy heart be a *renewed* heart, a sanctified, an holy heart, fit to bring forth good thoughts every day. Beloved, a wicked man may have a thousand good thoughts, and yet go to hell in the midst of them all. God cast a good thought into the heart of the King of *Babylon* to go against *Judah* and *Jerusalem* for to punish his people for their sins, and to avenge himself on them for the breach of his Covenant: but what saith the text? *Howbeit he thought not so.* Isa. 10. No, his only ayme was how to get honour, how to inrich, to enlarge his territories, and to bring down the Nations under him, and to make his name and fame to be spread, and declared through all the world. So God casts many good thoughts into many a wicked mans heart to repent, and to leave his drunkennesse, his pride, his swearing and whoring, to be holy and religious: howbeit he thinks not so, but he thinks how to eate and drink, how to be proud and haughty; how to be

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be rich and great in the world; how to be vain and licentious: yea thy thoughts are vile and vain all the day long.

Oh that men were wiſe *truly* to underſtand this! the want whereof is the cauſe why many thouſands go to hell and are damned for ever. I will make it plain to you: A wicked man reaſons thus with himſelf; I confeſſe, and it is true, I ſinne every day againſt God, and ſometimes drink a pot with my friend, though ſometimes I let fall an oath, and am overtaken in my infirmities,, yet I thank God, he hath ſanctified my heart; for I think of God and of Chriſt, and I oft call upon his name, and let my thoughts run on good things; God and heaven are many times in my mind, and I am ſorry when I do amiſſe, and the Lord hath bleſt me with a large portion of outward things. Beſides I ſee theſe and theſe ſignes of grace in me, and therefore I think my caſe to be happy. And thus ſecurely they live, and ſo they go on, and ſo they die, and ſo go to hell and periſh for ever and ever. Here is the miſery of it, many think of God, and of Chriſt, of death, and of their laſt account, of heaven, of hell, of faith, and repentance, of leaving ſinne, of crucifying their luſts, and practiſing of holineſſe. Now men think that their thinking of theſe things, is a part of their diſcharge, when indeed they are Additions to, and peeces of their talents, which increaſe their judgements. God caſts in a thought of repentance, of holineſſe, of the remembrance of death, and laſt account:

Dost thou find thy heart never the better and holier by them? Then know it is only Gods haunting of thy heart, and Gods calling upon thee, and Gods inviting thee unto repentance, to leave thy sinnes, to come out of thy deadnesse and formality, to prepare for thy death and judgment; and therefore I say, if thy heart now think not so, if thy heart do not repent, beleeve, and grow more zealous, and thou art not drawn the neerer to God; I say then, that the more of these good thoughts that thou hast had, the greater thy doome will be: if thou hast had ten thousands of them, if they have beene onely Gods haunting of thy heart, think thou then now of grace, of God, of thy poor soul, which is not bettered by them, nor made holy, then know they are peeces of thy talent, and it doth make thy torments in hell the greater.

2. Secondly, *thou hast good thoughts, but the question is, whether they be fleeting or abiding thoughts:* Many think of God, of grace, of heaven, of the word of God; and when they heare a Sermon, they will think of God; but these thoughts, though they come into their minds, yet they go away presently, they are in and out at an instant, in a trice, they passe away and are gone. Beloved, there are two kinds of vaine thoughts; 1. vaine, because the *substance and matter* of them is vain, and so all worldly thoughts are vain: 2. or else for their *want of durance and lasting:* and so are all thoughts of heaven, of God, and grace, and of Christ, if they vanish away, they

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are all vain thoughts, though they seeme otherwise. Haer what God saith, *Gen.* 6. 5. *God saw that the wickednesse of man was great upon the earth, and all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart were only evill continually*: [all the imaginations] great is the emphasis of this word [*all*] all the thoughts: yea all universally, are only evill continually.

But you will say unto me, Doth not a wicked man think that there is a God: why, that is a good thought; doth he not think that this God is to be observed and worshipped? why, this is a good thought; doth he not think that sin is to be forsaken? that is a good thought; doth he not think of heaven, and of Christ? how then are their thoughts *only evill* and that *continually*?

I answer, because all the thoughts of a wicked mans heart are vaine: that is, vanishing thoughts, not vaine for the *matter*, which sometimes may be good and holy, but vaine because *they soone vanish away*; thoughts that come and tarry not, that leave no impression in their hearts behind them, these are all vaine thoughts, according to that of the Apostle, *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vaine*: 1 Cor. 3. 20. Beloved, in a godly mans heart, when a good thought comes, it abides and dwels a good while in him; and when it goes away it leaves a good impression behind it; it leaves a sweet smell and savour in the heart after it is gone, it's made more holy, and sanctified by it. When a good thought comes into a godly mans heart,

it leaves the print of it behind: when a wicked man hath a good thought, he tosseth it up and down, and suffers it not to stay, but presently puts it away: let a thought of the world come in, and he can give it entertainment for seven dayes, yea for seven yeers, yea all his life he sets his heart as a wide gate open to receive them, and to entertain them: but if a thought of God, or of repentance, of holinesse and salvation come into his mind, he is tyred out with it, and it soon vanisheth away; therefore so long as thy thoughts are thus vain, though for the *matter* good, if thou hast never so many of them, yet if they *abide not*, but thou thinkest and unthinkest them again; if they come and give thy soule a jog, and so away; the more I say thou hast of them, though thou hast many millions, the greater will be thy doom at the last day.

3. Thirdly, *thou thinkest of God, but the question is, whether thy good thoughts be studied, or accidentall thoughts*; a wicked man that runs gadding in his thoughts here and there, over the whole world upon this and that, and I know not what, in the midst of a lottery of thoughts he cannot chuse but stumble upon some good: he thinks on God, he thinks on Christ, he thinks on heaven; but it is by the by, these thoughts of his are not *naturall*; but if he think of the world, of his pleasures, of his outward delights and contentments, these thoughts arise naturally out of his heart, they are his owne. Now it may be a thought of God comes by the way; But

a godly man not onely thinks of God, but he *studies* how to think of God; It is his continuall endeavour to bring his mind to be *fixed* upon God; it is his whole care for to have good thoughts to *dwell habitually* in him. There is an excellent phrase used to set it forth, *Malac.* 3. 16. *They that feared the Lord spake one unto another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him of all them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his Name.* Where I pray you for to mark, that *thinking upon Gods name*, and *the fear of God* are joyned together: for thinking on God, comes from the fear of God; a godly man thinks upon God and fears him; he thinks that God is alwayes with him in every place, and he trembles before him: he thinks God beholds all his thoughts and affections, and he trembles at him: he thinks as he walks up and down in his way, as he is imployed in his calling, as he is performing of any duty of Religion, that Gods eye is upon him and beholds him: and therefore he fears to offend and displease him. A wicked man will sweare and blaspheme the name of God, and by and by it may be he will cry God mercy, and so he thinks of God. The man breaks out it may be into wrath and malice, fury and passion; and then it may be a thought will come into his mind for to cry God mercy for it, and thus he thinks of God: The man is careless, earthly, dead, and luke-warme in the performance of good duties; and because his conscience tels him

it is not good, he will ask God forgiveneſſe: he will be proud, vain and rotten in his ſpeeches, and then it may be a thought will come into his mind to aſk God forgiveneſſe, and ſo he thinks of God; he will think of the world, of his pleaſures, profits, and of his luſts and ſinnes, and then it may be a good thought wil come into his mind, and then it may be he will think a little of God too. Beloved, this is carnall and devilliſh thinking on God; thy thoughts then of God muſt bee joyned with the fear of God.

Fourthly and laſtly, *thou thinkeſt of God, but the queſtion is, whether thy thoughts of him be profitable or unprofitable thoughts*: a godly man thinks of repentance, and repents upon it: hee thinks of calling upon God more faithfully and fervently then he did before: and he *accompliſhes* his thoughts: for he goes about it, and his heart is the better for it. Thus it was with *David* when he ſaid, *I thought on my waies, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies*, Pſalm 119. 59. *I thought on my waies* (there was his good thoughts) *and turned my feet into thy teſtimonies*, (there was the profit of his good thoughts.) But on the contrary thou thinkeſt on God, but God hath never the more ſervice of thee: thou thinkeſt of leaving of thy good fellowſhip, and merry companions; but for all thy thoughts, thou retaineſt them ſtill: thou thinkeſt to give over all thy deadneſſe and luke-warmneſſe, and to get more zeale and fervencie: yet day after day, and yeare after yeare, thy heart is as dead, vain and

and ſecure as before, as ever before. Examine thy ſelfe and ſee, thou haſt good thoughts (thou ſaiſt) but where is the profit of them? thou thinkeſt of leaving thy wrath, and of bridling thy filthy paſſions: but art thou enabled by thy thoughts to put up an injury the better? It may be thou thinkeſt on death; but is thy life the more *holy* and *ſanctified* by it? Thou thinkeſt of Chriſt and his bloud; but is thy heart purged by it? Oh the wretched miſery of the moſt men in the world, becauſe of the unprofitableneſſe of their thoughts! they have many good thoughts, but they want the profitable uſe of them, they get no good by them.

There is an excellent deſcription of the thoughts of wicked men (though it be Apocrypha,) *The heart of the fooliſh is like a Cart wheel, and his thoughts like the rowling Axletree.* As the Cart wheele goes round all the day, and yet remaines on the Axletree; ſo is it with wicked men, their thoughts wheele and wheele them up and downe a thouſand thouſand times, their thoughts run upon this thing, and then upon another thing, and ſo they rowle up and down continually, yet their heart is at the ſame paſſe it was ſtill; an *earthly* heart it was, and ſo it is ſtill, a *profane* heart it was, and ſo it is ſtill; a *carnall* proud heart it was, and ſo it remains ſtill; But let theſe know, that the time haſtens wherein God will judge them even for their very thoughts.

Where are they then that ſay *thought is free?* It is true indeed, *it is free from mens knowledge,* 2.

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and from mens Courts but not from Gods; they are not free from Gods all-seeing eye, and knowledge. *Thou hast tried me and known me* (saith the Prophet) *thou understandest my thoughts afarre off*, *Psal.* 139. Beloved, as you are in the Ale-house, or gaming house, as you walk abroad in the fields, as you are employed in your callings, or about any holy duty, God seeth all thy thoughts what is going in, and what is comming out; there is never a thought in thy heart, but God sees it; how then can thoughts be free? *God will weigh the thoughts of men*, Prov. 16. 2.

Beloved, what a fearfull day will that bee, when God shall take his Scales and weigh (no mans bodies and estates, for then it may bee that rich men and fat and grosse men will out-weigh them that are better:) but he will take mens thoughts and weigh them, hee will weigh their soules: he will take mens good thoughts, and put them into one scale, and their bad, earthly, carnall, and unprofitable thoughts, into another scale, and to try which weighes heavyest: Now if thy earthly and sinfull thoughts weigh heavyest, then down thou goest into eternall damnation.

2. Secondly, *as thoughts are not free from Gods knowledge, so are they not free from Gods Word*; for Gods word can meet with them: for it is *lively and mighty in operation, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, Hebr 4. 12. Doth the word of God discern the thoughts of mens hearts? Then much more doth the God of

of this Word, and therefore how can thoughts be free?

Thirdly and lastly, *they are not free from the condemnation of hell and damnation. I am he* (saith God) *that searcheth the hearts and reins, and I will give to every one of you according to his works*; or as some translations have it, *according to your thoughts*: *Rev.* 3. 23. Now if God will so severely punish thoughts, take heed then how thou tetainest any evill thoughts. 3.

I should here give you some *means* in the use, that so you might rid your selves from vain thoughts.

First, *love the word of God*, if ever thou wilt come out of them; prize the truth of God, and labour to get thy mind and thoughts to be set on better things; and then the thoughts of the world, and all vain things will vanish away. This course the Prophet *David* took, Psal. 119. 113. *I hate vain thoughts, but thy Law do I love.* How came it to passe that he *hated vain thoughts*? namely, by *loving Gods Law*: if he had not *loved* Gods Law and those excellent things therein, and set his heart on them; hee could never have *hated* vain thoughts: The way then to break of thy league with vain thoughts, is to be in league with good thoughts. Dost thou complain of vain thoughts in prayer, in hearing the word, in receiving of the Sacraments, and art thou stuffed and filled with them, that thou canst not think upon God and holy things? thou dost hereby bewray thine own rottennesse and *Means* 1.

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corruption. And therefore know, that if thou loveſt the Lord and his Word, and didſt ſet thy thoughts upon him, thou wouldſt never have them ſo much employed about ſuch baſe things.

2. Secondly, if ever thou wouldſt rid thy heart of vain thoughts, eſpecially when thou art in holy action, *thou muſt goe unto God by prayer*; there is no greater bridle to reſtrain a man from vain thoughts, then this conſideration, that hee is to *goe to God*. I ſpeak not this to the men of this world: *Carnall* men, who can ruſh into Gods preſence hand over head, without any fear or reverence, they can ſet upon any duty without any preparation: but I ſpeak it to the godly man, whoſe heart dreads and ſtands in awe of God: Wilt thou let thy mind rove and run all the day on worldly things? how then wilt thou call upon God? Doſt thou not know that this is the cauſe of thy dulneſſe, thy deadnes and wandrings of thy heart, when thou art about any good duty, namely, becauſe thou ſuffereſt thy heart to be laſhing out, and roving abroad on the world all day, no marvell if it keep his haunt at night: and therefore thy heart being vain, God will never hear thy prayer, *Job* 35. 13. *God will never hear vanity*. Comeſt thou to God with a vain prayer? God will never hear it. Comeſt thou with a vain eare to the hearing of the Word? God will never hear it; or with a vain heart to the Sacrament? God will not regard it. Lay this ſeriouſly to thy heart, if ever thou wouldſt

wouldſt have thy heart to the duty thou art about, buſie thy mind upon good things; for if thy heart be accuſtomed to vain and worldly things all the day, it is no marvell if it returne to its haunt again at night.

Thirdly, conſider that you have not *ſo learned Chriſt*: It is the Apoſtles argument, *Epheſ.* 3. conſider then what you have learned of Chriſt; hath Chriſt taught you ſo? hath Chriſt taught you ſuch a love, and given you ſuch a liberty, that you ſhould love the world more then him, and imploy and beſtow all your thoughts wholly in ſeeking after vain things? Hath Chriſt taught you ſuch a faith as this? Hath Chriſt taught you ſuch a repentance as this, to have your thoughts more upon the world then upon Chriſt? to repent of ſin, and yet never *forſake* ſinne? Have ye ſo learned Chriſt? Hath he not taught you ſuch a faith as purifieth the heart, ſuch a ſanctification as cleanſeth the ſoul and the minde, ſuch an obedience as bringeth every thought into ſubjection unto himſelf? Therefore if now thou ſhouldſt ſtill retain thy vain, dead, earthly and carnall thoughts, it is not to learn Chriſt: Chriſt teacheth thee no ſuch doctrine, nor giveth thee any ſuch licentious libertie; but thou learneſt of the Devill, and of thine owne heart: for *all evill and vain thoughts* ariſe from theſe *three* heads.

Firſt, from the *variety and abundance of the thoughts of the world*, which our Saviour calls *the cares of this world*. 1.

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2. Secondly, from *the fountaine of corruption in mans heart*, the heart of man being alwayes like a fink, naturally running with filthineſſe, or like a living quickſet, alwayes bearing: ſo is it with the heart of man, alwayes imagining vain thoughts.

3. Thirdly, from *the damned malice of the Devill*, and his fearfull ſuggeſtions and temptations both within and without: the Devill is fitly called a *tempter and trier*; for by theſe ſuggeſtions and temptations he feels and tries mens hearts, and thereby knowing to what they are moſt *inclined*, and which way they are ſooneſt overcome, accordingly he fits his temptations for to intrap them. Now theſe thoughts are infinitely variable, according to the *conſtitution*, *place*, *quality*, *paſſions*, *affections*, *and conditions* of men: as of the poor man in his beggery, of the rich man in his abundance, of the Miniſter in his calling, of the Magiſtrate in his, and ſo of all other men. Now the whole world is not able to fill the heart; how then ſhall we number the thoughts of it? But for the better underſtanding, we will rank them into theſe four heads, to ſhow how *thoughts become vain.*

1. 1. *Materially*, mens thoughts are vain, when the matter of them is vain.

2. 2. *Formally*, when though for the matter they are never ſo good, yet the *manner* of thinking them is evill.

3. 3. *Efficientially*, when the man that thinks them is vain.

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4. When it is a thought that might become the best Saint upon the earth, or a glorified Angel in heaven; yet *the drift of the soule being carnall and vain*, the soule thereby becomes vain also. 4.

First then *materiall* vaine thoughts, are all *thoughts of the world*, of the works of thy calling, of thy recreations, eating, drinking, sleeping, thoughts of thy wife and children, and the like; they are vain thoughts, not sinfull necessarily, yet they may come to be sinfull five manner of wayes. 1.

First, *when we think of them primarily*, that is, in the first place, when we think of them before we think of God. Tell me then, what are thy first thoughts in the *morning?* Hereby a man may know his thoughts whether they bee good or evill. Consider, I say, what it is that first presents it selfe unto thy thoughts: certainly, that which the heart is most haunted withall, and most taken up with, is most naturall unto it: If the heart be carnall and earthly, it will have carnall and earthly thoughts: if it be a godly and gracious heart, it will labour to make God the first in his thoughts. I know the godly man faults in many things, and many unruly thoughts in him may *rebell*; but it is the very griefe of his soule, and he will never rest nor be at quiet, till he hath got Balm from Gilead, strength from Christ for the *subduing* and crucifying of them, even of those vain and sinfull thoughts that stick closest unto their hearts, and are most prone unto them *Manner.* 1.

them naturally: so that it is the practice of a godly man first in the morning to lift up his heart with his hand unto God; and when he is up, his thoughts are wholly upon God. See this in *David*, who considering that the Lord was present everywhere, made this use of it, *When I awake I am present with thee, Psal.* 139. 18. His heart was lifted up to God, he did endeavour to shake hands with God (as it were) in his holy meditations, worshipping and adoring God with his *first* thoughts: he would be sure to give God the flower and Maiden-head of his first service and thoughts; as soon as ever he was *awake*, his heart was in heaven. This shewes that the thoughts of men that live in their sins, are damnable thoughts? Thou that art a drunkard, a swearer, a profane person, a carnall worldling, that never hast repented, I tell thee, that the very thinking of thy meat and drink is damnable, the very thoughts of thy recreations and of thy sleep, are damnable thoughts: to think of the workes of thy calling, yea of setting thy foot upon the ground, or of any thing that God hath commanded thee for to doe, are all damnable thoughts. Why? Because thou givest not God thy *first* thoughts. Wilt thou think of thy belly and back, before thou thinkest of *God*, and how to be converted unto him? Wilt thou think of thy Markets and Faires, before thou thinkest of thy reconciliation with God? The first thing that every soule is bound for to doe, is to get in with God: *First seek the kingdom of God.*

(With

saith our Saviour, *and the righteousnesse thereof*, *Matth.* 6. 35. Where our Saviour doth not forbid our taking of thought for the things of this life, but that they should not be sought after in the *first* place; so that our first thoughts and endeavours should be after the Kingdom of heaven. Therefore all thoughts whatsoever, which are conceived before a man bee converted, and so thinks of God, are all damnable thoughts.

Secondly, all worldly thoughts are sinfull, *when we think of them too usually* (as *Chrysostome* speakes) because we think of the universalitie of them. Beloved, it is lawfull to think of the world, and to think of our trade and imployments, to think of our corn, of our cattell, fields, barnes, wives, children: for if God have *commanded* or commended *these* things unto us, then surely he gives us leave to think on them, that so we may accomplish our businesse the better; but let us take heed they bee not *too usuall* with us: for we have soules as well as bodies, and there is a heaven as well as an earthly business to think upon: thou art not to live here alwayes, therefore take heed that thy thoughts be not too usuall and common upon the things of the world let not earth and earthly things have too much of thy thoughts. As the Prophet *David* seeing the thoughts of wicked men wholly to run after the things of the world, he tels them, *all their thoughts perish*: and so I tell you, if that your thoughts on the world run together with heap

Manner. 2.

and crowd, and then you bundle them up in bundles (as it were) they all prove damnable, and shall perish.

Manner. 3. Thirdly, worldly thoughts are sinfull and damnable, *if thou thinkest of them too savourly*: a carnall-minded man thinkes savourly of the things of the world, the thoughts of earthly things are savoury unto them: a wicked man hee will thinke of God and of the world: but which is the *savoureſt* thought to him? He will think of Christ, of heaven, and of the word of God, and of such a Sermon he heard, but alas, hee finds no savour, taste, nor relish in them; he finds no sweetnesse, joy, or delight in them: but when he thinkes of the world, of his gold and silver, of his lands and livings, Oh these are merry thoughts unto him, these are sweet unto him, and pleasant to him, and his heart is not at home in his own nest; he can think of these seven dayes, nay seven moneths, nay seven yeares together, and yet never be weary, but his thoughts as ful & as fresh as at the first: But bring him to a Sermon, or to a prayer, and he is jaded presently, his heart is empty, and his thoughts are at an end: For (saith the Apostle) *they that are after the flesh savour the things of the flesh*, Rom. 8, 5. It is a *true* note of an earthly, carnall, fleshly heart, to be thinking on earthly and vain things savourly. Thou maist *think* on the world, but it must be onely with a *cast of thy thought*, as one that looks upon a thing with a squint eye: but when thou art to think on God, or on the things of

of God; then thou must *gather all thy thoughts and affections*, thou must lay *all* the powers of thy soule together, and thou must imploy them *only* to this work.

Fourthly, worldly thoughts become sinfull, *when we think of them without counsell*; then (saith *Solomon*) *they come to nought*, when a man considers not afore-hand what thoughts are necessary and needfull and so restraines and keeps off all impertinent thoughts: then his thoughts will prove distrustfull, carking thoughts, caring for the morrow, contrary to the rule of Christ, *Matth. 6. 33. Take no care for to morrow, let to morrow care for it self.* He doth not forbid here Christian *provident* thoughts: for godly, honest, and sober thoughts, are fitting and necessary, but he seems hereby to cut off all *distrusting*, carking thoughts. *Manner.* 4.

Fifthly, worldly thoughts come to be sinfull, *when they are thought needlesly*. And here I will shew how farre a man may think of the world; namely, so farre as his *necessary* busines requires. Suppose a mans businesse be upon merchandise, it is lawfull to think of it, and of his shop and wares; but if thou wou'dst know *how farre*; why so farre as is it for thy *businesse*; But if thou hast so many of them, that thy heart is *taken up* with them, and thy mind *still* on them, then they are sin'full thoughts. There is many a man that in following of his businesse bestowes more thoughts then his businesse requires, he hath ten thousands of superfluous *Manner.* 5.

fluous thoughts; but let such remember the exhortation of the Wise man, *establish thy thoughts by counsell*: counsell will tell a man when he hath thought *enough*, and what thoughts are *fit* for his imployment. Not that any man can carry himself *always* in that golden mediocrity or mean; but a Christians care must be daily more and more to *pare off* all *superfluous* thoughts of earthly things.

2. Now we come to the second thing: 2. *Thoughts are vain formally, when though the matter of them be never so good, yet the manner of thinking them is evill.* It is possible that a wicked man go to hell, though he performes the same things for the *matter* of them, that a godly man doth: a godly man *comes to Church*, so doth a wicked man; a godly man *prayes in his family*, so doth a wicked man; a godly man *reads the Scriptures*, so doth a wicked man; a godly man *repeats Sermons*, and conferres of good things, so doth a wicked man. There is no work that comes to the *outward* act, that a godly man doth, but a wicked man may do the same: here onely is the difference, in the *manner* of working. I will set it out to you by a place of Scripture; *In a great house* (saith the Apostle) *there are not onely vessels of gold, and of silver, but also of wood and of stone, some to honour, and some to dishonour*, 2 Tim. 2. 20. Mark how the Apostle here sets out the reprobate and the elect, comparing them to vessels of honour, and dishonour: the vessels of dishonour are of the same matter

matter that the veſſels of honour are of: ſuppoſe it be pewter or ſilver, caſt it into an honourable forme, and it will be a veſſell of honour; but caſt it into a diſhonourable forme, and it will be a veſſell of diſhonour, for baſe and mean ſervice; even ſo it is between a true Chriſtian and a meer formall profeſſor, the *matter* of their ſervice is one and the ſame; ſuppoſe it be hearing the Word, or receiving of the Sacraments, prayer, or the like, the ſubſtance and action is the ſame; but take the ſame prayer, and let a godly man caſt it in his forme, and it is holy and prevailes with God: let a wicked man take the ſame prayer, and caſt it into his diſhonorable forme, and it becomes ſinfull, not regarded, and abominable in Gods eyes. For hearing of the Word of God, the godly man heares, and the wicked man heares; the *matter* in both is the ſame; the godly man he caſteth the Word into a godly mould, he heares the Word, and he trembles at it; he heares the Word and beleeves it, he heares the Word, and his heart bowes to it, and reſolves to practiſe it: a wicked man he heares the Word too, but he caſteth it into a diſhonourable mould, he heares it with deadneſſe and dulneſſe, without trembling, without faith and obedience. So a godly man may think thoughts of God, and ſo may a wicked man think thoughts of God, the *matter* of both is good; yet the thoughts of the wicked are vaine, though hee thinks of God, becauſe he caſteth it into his diſhonourable frame: he feares not God, his heart

trembles not at God, but his heart is as full of dead earthly affections as before; he thinks of hearing the Word, but it is after his own fashion, he thinks of praying, but he prayes with his owne spirit, and not with the spirit of Adoption.

The Psalmist tels us, that the whoremaster, the drunkard, and the thief, thinks of God, but it is after his own fashion: *Psal.* 50. 21. *These things hast thou done* (saith God) *and I held my tongue, and thou thoughtest that I was even such a one as thy self*: A wicked man goes on in his sins, and thinks that they are not so devillish and abominable, as some say that they are: and he thinks that God thinks so too; he is earthly, carnall, luke-warme, and dead-hearted, and if he repent at the last, he thinks all will be well, and hee thinks God is of the same mind too: he goes on in his drunkennesse, swearing, pride, and hypocrisie; and he thinks if he do but remember to ask God mercy, and to cry, Lord receive my soul, when he is going out of the world, he thinks he shall not go to hell, but be carried to the joyes of heaven, and he thinks God is of his mind, that God thinks so too: But mark what the Lord saith, *I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thee. Oh consider this you that forget God, lest he teare you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you.*

3. Thirdly, mens thoughts are vain, when the heart that thinks upon them is earthly and vain; wherefore if all the wicked men in the world should

ſhould lay their heads together to think a good thought, yet they cannot: for their hearts are vain hearts, ſinfull hearts, they may think of excellent propoſitions concerning God, his worſhip, his word, and ſervice; but ſo long as the heart that thinks upon them is carnall and vain, they cannot ſpeak that which is good, as ſaith our Saviour: *Matthew* 12. 34. *How can you ſpeak good things?* Why, may ſome man ſay? *may not a wicked man read a Chapter in a Bible? are the words ſo hard to be underſtood, and pronounced? cannot a wicked man take a Sermon and read it, and hear a Sermon and repeat it? what are letters and ſyllables ſo hard to be pronounced?* *Object.*

I anſwer, (beloved) that is not the meaning of our Saviour [*How can ye that are evill ſpeak good things*]: no, no, a wicked man may read Gods Word, and propound good queſtions, as well as a true Chriſtian; but he cannot ſpeak good words, that is, he cannot ſpeak him from a *good heart*; and therefore his heart being carnall and vain, good words in his mouth are as a jewell in a ſwines ſnout: It is a word indeed, but not a ſpeech, when he reads or pronounceth Gods Word. *Ariſtotle* ſaith, that ſpeech is nothing but the expreſſion of that that is within the heart. Now then, if the word and truth of God be not ingraffed in thy heart, if thy heart be not heavenly when thou ſpeakeſt of heavenly things, thou doſt pronounce them, but not ſpeak them. But when thou ſpeakeſt of earthly *Anſw.*

things then thou ſpeakeſt to the purpoſe; becauſe thy heart is ſet upon them, and thy minde and thy tongue goe together, there is no jarre or diſcord betwixt them: but if thy heart be not pure, though thou ſpeakeſt good things, or holy things, yet in Chriſt ſenſe thou ſpeakeſt them not: For (ſay I) how can a vain, evill, corrupt heart think good thoughts? *An evill tree cannot bring forth good fruit* (ſaith our Saviour); he doth not ſay, that an evill tree cannot be made good, for it may be graffed into another ſtock; divers wayes there are to make it good: but ſo long as it is a corrupt tree, it cannot bring forth good fruit; *Doe men gather grapes of thorns, or figes of thiſtles?* Doſt thou goe to a drunkard, and thinkeſt there to finde any religion in him? or to a whoremaſter to finde grace in him? Doſt thou goe to a ſwearer or a prophane perſon, and thinkeſt thou to find any feare of God in them? Indeed ſometimes there may be ſome morall good found in them, but they are as a pearle in a dung-hill out of its place.

Fourthly, *all mens thoughts come to be vain, when the driſt and end of the heart and ſoule in thinking of them is vain.*

But thou wilt ſay unto mee, *the end of my good thoughts is Gods glory. What? is it not to Gods glory that we goe to the Word and Sacraments, that we pray and give almes?*

I anſwer, the end of every good work in *it ſelf* is Gods glory; but is it the end of *the worker*, ſpeaker, or thinker? I make no queſtion

queſtion but the end of a good action in it ſelf, is the glory of God; ſo the end of prayer is the glory of God, the end of all preaching and Sermons is the glory of God, the end of giving of almes, and of all good thoughts, is the glory of God, but the end of the man that prayes and preaches, what is that? the end of the hearer and giver of almes, what is that? the end of him that ſpeaks well, what is that? Beloved, muſt men have falſe and *corrupt ends*, which we will branch out into theſe *three* heads.

For the firſt, *men will be thinking and plodding from morning till night of their worldly buſineſſe: Now becauſe they know they muſt think on God, to make God amends, perhaps they will think on him at night, when they have diſhonoured him all the day.* So men will ſwear and ſwagger drink and be drunk, and when they have done, ſay, Lord have mercy upon me, and ſo they think to make God amends. What (beloved) will yee ſweare, ſwagger, drink, be drunk, and lie, be ſecure and worldly, and then ask God forgiveneſſe to make him amends? This is to break *Priſcians* head, that you may give him a plaiſter. Will you treſpaſſe your neighbour, that you may ask him forgiveneſſe? This is a damned and deviliſh religion; yet this is the religion of many men in the world, you ſhall have them keep daies and weeks and yeares in the obſervation of the times of Gods worſhip; they will keep the Sabbath in comming to Church, they will hear Sermons, pray and think of God:

but

but all this is to make God amends for the wrong that they have done him: they know they have offended God, and therefore they will do something to make him amends: like those wicked men in *Jeremies* time, who did *steale, murder, commit adultery, swear falsly, and burn incense unto Baal; and walk after the gods whom they knew not*, and then come and stand before God in his house, which was called by his name, and said, *We are delivered, though we have done all these abominations.* As if God should say unto wicked men, What, will yee swear, steal, lie, and be earthly, giving up your selves unto all manner of lewdnesse in the breach and contempt of my commandements, and then think by making a prayer unto me, and by lifting up your eyes unto me, and by giving your eares to hear my word, thereby to make me recompence? No, no, *I have showed thee, O man, what is good*, Micah. 8.

2. Secondly, *the end of mens thoughts is commonly to collogue with God.* Let a man be under the crosse, in calamity, pain, and misery, *then* God shall heare of him often, then he will think of God, and of his sinnes: nay, the beastliest wretch in a whole Parish, upon his sick-bed, then, Oh how will he call upon God, then send for the Minister, let him pray for me, read a chapter or some good book; then God shall have service upon service, then he shall have the first, second, and third course. But all this is but to be raised up again; and then when he hath received a little strength, he fall off again: like

the Jewes, who when *God slew them, they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God; nevertheless they did but dissemble with him with their mouthes, and flatter him with their double hearts*, Ps. 78. 34. There is many a man that seeks to God, yea, that seeks to him with teares, and performes many a good duty, and yet he doth but flatter with God, he doth it but to curry favour with him: hee is afraid of sickneſſe, croſſes, plagues, and death, and curſes upon him, if hee ſhould not doe ſo: and therefore to prevent this, he will diſſemble ſome ſervice to God.

Thirdly, *to ſmother and choake their owne conſciences*; their hearts think and tell them, they muſt think of God, their conſciences tell them, that they muſt have ſome holineſſe, ſome religion; that they muſt keep the Sabbath in ſome ſort, that they muſt pray, and goe to Church: and hence it is, that the drunkard, ſwearer, whoremaſter, will ſometimes have thoughts of God, and will be performing ſome outward acts of Religion, Why? his conſcience otherwiſe would not let him be at reſt, but it is as the Devils bandog to drive him to it. 3.

Thus when the Prophet commanded the people to worſhip the Lord, to reverence his name, to hallow his Sabbaths; their conſciences told them that they muſt doe ſo, or elſe all the threatnings of wrath and vengeance denounced by the Prophets would come upon them, Hence it is that the Lord by his Prophet exhorts, ſaying, *Ariſe yee, and depart, for this is not your reſt*: your minde

mind hath another haunt, you have this and that black luſt, this is not your reſt. Doth thy heart reſt on God and good things? If thy heart be good and holy, ſo that it takes up its reſt in God, and in Chriſt, then it is well; but if thou only turneſt aſide to good duties, and falleſt as it were by chance upon holy things; away, away (ſaith God) this is not your reſt. *Ariſtotle* ſaith, that *the end being of a thing conſiſteth in the end of a thing.* Therefore if the end of thy thoughts and courſes be earthly and vain, then certainly thy religion is earthly and vain. Thou goeſt up and down; what is it that thou lookeſt after? Is it that thou maieſt have grace, or that thou maiſt follow thy calling, and get thy living? is it this that thou wouldſt have, for which thou keepeſt ſuch a digging and ſcraping, and ſuch a laying up? Then thy end is carnall and vain, and thy drift and end declareth the truth of thy ſoul, that it is carnall and vain.

THE

THE JUDGEMENT OF THE WORLD By SAINTS at the last Day.

DELIVERED

And learnedly discovered in a Sermon preached

By that vigilant and painfull Minister of the Word,

WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.
Sometime Fellow of *Pembroke Hall* in *Cambridge*, and late Parson of *Rochford* in *Essex*.

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A SERMON OF

Mr. WILLIAM FENNERS

Upon this ensuing Text.

1 Cor. 6. part of the 2d verse.

Know yee not that the Saints shall judge the World?

THE Corinthians thought *Paul* had converted many poore mean men amongst them, Chapter 1. 26,27. *God hath chosen the fooliſh things of the world to confound the wiſe, and the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty*: yet the Nobles, the Lawyers, the Counsellers, the chiefe men in the Citie, the Apostle had not converted one of them, or at the least very few. Brethren, you see your calling, who they are that be converted to the obedience of the Gospel of Christ from the evill of their wayes: not many wise men after the flesh, not many rich, 1.

rich not many noble, some *few* there be, here and there one; but for the most part they are a company of poor beggerly Christians: Now (it seems) these poor Christians having controversies one with another, went to Law among themselves, and that before unbeleevers. The Apostle condemnes this their *going to Law*, and would have them cease their suits and quarrels one against another before the unjust and unbeleevers, and that by *four* Arguments:

1. First, *by the shamefulnesse of it*, verse 5. *I speak it to your shame*; as if he should say, Are you such fooles, that you cannot take up these matters among your selves? that you cannot make references of your wrongs to mediate one to another, but that you must go to Law before unbeleevers?

2. Secondly, *from the scandalousnesse of it*. It is a thing so scandalous and offensive to those that are without, that I wonder any of you dare be so bold as to go to Law one with another. What will the world think? What, are *these* the men that professe the Gospel? Are these they that have the *Wisdome* of God in them, and that are led by the Spirit of God? And have *they* no more understanding in them, then when they have any matter of controversie, they cannot end it among themselves, but must go to Law before *the unjust and unbeleevers?* (as they terme them.)

3. Thirdly, *from the unseemingnesse of it*, in the second verse. *Do you not know that the Saints shall*

shall judge the earth? What? hath God made you Judges of the world, and doe you goe to be judged by the world? Or, as *Ambrose* speakes hath God appointed you to be Judges of the *men* in the world, and are you not fit to be Judges of the *things* of the world?

Fourthly, *from the strangenesse of it*; *Dare any of you?* He speakes interrogatively (vers. 1.) 4. It is a strange thing that you should come to that impudencie against the Gospel of Christ; one would think that you should tremble and quake at such a thing as this is. What, is there never a wise Christian amongst you? never an understanding professor that is able to take up a controversie, or decide and judge between his brethren? what a strange thing is this? Then hee backs it with *foure* Arguments.

1. *Because they were Brethren*, vers. 6. *Brother goes to Law with brother.* 1.

2. *Because it was about the things of this life* What? hath God made you Judge of *heavenly* things, of *Angels*, and are you unfit to Judge of *the things of this life*? 2.

3. *It was about small matters* (ver. 2.) whereas you shall sit upon *men* and *Angels*, and the weightiest matters in the world, the greatest things of Gods law, judging them to the greatest penaltie and punishment even to eternall damnation: and are yee *unworthy* then *to judge* even of *the smallest matters*? 3.

4. And lastly, *Because it was about such things, as the meanest Christian in the towne might have* 4.

taken up, and have ended: *Set up those that are least esteemed.*

Doe you not know, that the Saints shall judge the world?

Doct. I need not goe far for a point, the word affords it; The Doctrine is; That *the Saints shall judge the world.*

It is an old truth, yea as old as the world it selfe. you may read it in the fourth verse of *Judes* Epistle: That *Enoch the seventh from Adam prophecied, saying; Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his Saints.* God will not onely come to judgement himselfe, but he will come attended with all his Saints, even with all the godly, *to execute vengeance upon all the world.* So our Saviour told Saint *Peter*, and not onely him, but all that follow him in the regeneration: *They shall sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* Mat. 9. 18. *They shall judge the Nations, and have dominion over the people*, Wisd. 3. 8.

And now because doubt is the best way to attaine unto knowledge, let me answer a doubt, that may creepe in by the way; *How shall the Saints judge the world?*

Object.

Answ. Not by pronouncing of judgement upon the world, for that Christ alone shall do; *Then shall the King say to them on his left hand, Depart yee cursed*, Mat. 25. But *the Saints shall judge the world these foure wayes:*

1. 1. *They shall judge the world, by their consent unto Christs judgement*, God traines up his children in this world, & educates them, and teacheth them

them how they may judge the world hereafter; he teacheth them in this life how to assent with his proceedings in the world; so that they are able to say, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are thy judgements* Psal. 119. 137. Now if the Saints be trained in *this life* to assent unto Gods proceedings with the world, much more then will they be able to know and consent unto Christs judgement, when he shall come with his Saints *to judge the world*: Now the Law saith, that *consenters are agents*: and therefore because the Saints shall *consent* to the judgement of Christ, therefore they are said to *judge* the world.

2. *The Saints shall judge the world by their applause of Christs judgement*: they shall not only give consent unto the judgment of Christ, but they shall also applaud it and commend it: when God shall say to all drunkards, swearers, lyers, Sabbath-breakers, and to all unbeleeving, impenitent, and graceles sinners, *Depart yee cursed into hell fire*, then though it were his owne father that begat him, or his mother that bare him, though it were his owne brother or sister, wife or child, that hath been as dear as his own life and soule to him; yet they shall clap their hands for joy, and applaud the most righteous sentence of God upon them; and they shall sing *Hallelujah, salvation, and honour, and power, be to the Lord our God for true & righteous are his judgements*; Rev. 19. 1, 2. Let them goe accursed as they are; for it is a righteous sentence passed on them. 2.

3. 3. *They shall judge the world by their Majestie*; they shall not only stand against the wicked, and consent to, and applaud that sentence that Christ shall passe against the wicked, but they shall be invested with robes of majestie, and with a diademe of glory: then shall the righteous shine as the starres in the firmament, and the wicked shall be amazed and astonished at the sight of them: as you may read in that platforme of judgement, *Matth.* 25. where Christ sets his Saints over against the world, that so the world may look upon them, and be confounded at their sight.

4. 4. *They judge the world by their lives and conversations*; (as *Ambrose* saith rightly) then is the world judged by them, when as the courses and manners of the world are not found upon them. Therefore it is a pretty observation of *Hilary* (if it be the meaning of the Text) (I will not say it is) upon the 2. *Psalme*; *Be wise yee Judges*: God hath appointed you to be Judges, to sit on his bench with his Sonne; learne then to be wise, get to be indued with spirituall wisedome and understanding, and to shine in all integritie and righteousnesse; and then turning his speech to the wicked, he say's, *Kisse the Sonne lest he be angry*, However it be, yet this is a truth, that by the *lives* of his Saints, he will judge the world; there saith shall judge the worlds infidelitie: their repentance shall judge the worlds impenitency; their accepting of, and taking the Lord Jesus, shall judge their rejection and neglect of Christ

Christ Jesus, their zeale shall judge the worlds luke-warmnesse, and their holinesse shall judge the worlds prophannesse.

1. *Reas.* 1. *Beause of the misticall union that is betwixt Christ and his Saints*; He is the *head*, **and they** are his *members*; now that which the head doth, we ascribe to the whole body; when the head speakes, the whole body speakes; when the head sees, the whole body sees: so when Christ judgeth the world, the whole body of Christ may truely be said to judge the world. *As much as you did it unto one of these* (saith Christ) *you did it unto me:* so in as much as Christ passeth sentence even all the members of the mysticall body of Christ judge with him.

Secondly, *Reas.* 2. *in regard of compassion*: I speak not of the word [*compassion*] as it signifies [*pitie*] but of *compassion of suffering with Christ*, seeing that Christ was reproched, contemned, hated, misused, and condemned by the world, the Saints are likewise with him; seeing *they* pertake **of the** afflictions, humiliations, and debasements of Christ here. *they* shall also be made pertakers with Christ in his glory. Here the wicked judge the Saints, and call them hypocrites, and dissemblers, and laugh and scoff at them, and wonder at them, as the Prophet brings in Christ speaking. *Esay.* 8. Behold, *I and the children that thou hast given me, are for signes and wonders in Israel*: The wicked count them for wonders and monsters in the world, judging them hypocrites and liers, which have nothing in them but rotten-

neſſe and diſſimulation. Now the rule of like for like ſhall take place here, and as they were judged by the world, ſo they ſhall be Judges of the world.

Reaſ. 3. Thirdly, *for the great terror to all wicked men at the day of judgement:* for as it is with a thiefe, not only when the Judge ſhall command to hang him, but all the Juſtices, and all the Countrey ſhall cry out, Hang him, hang him, he is judged the more terrible; ſo God will not onely ſay of all wicked and ungodly ſinners, Damne them damne them, but he will have all the Saints in heaven, and all the Saints on earth to cry out, Away with them, away with them, let them be damned, *Pſal.* 50.4,5. This will make their judgment ſo much the more terrible.

Reaſ. 4. Fourthly, *the Saints ſhall judge the world, becauſe God will ſo convince them, that their mouthes ſhall bee ſtopped*, they ſhall have never a ſyllable to excuſe themſelves withall, when they ſhall ſee men fleſh and bloud as themſelves are, when they ſhall ſee men and women, that have lived in the ſame towne, enjoyed the ſame Ordinance of God, lived in the ſame family, that did partake of the ſame bleſſings, and of the ſame croſſes and afflictions with themſelves, ſubject alſo to the ſame corruptions and ſinnes as themſelves, when they ſhall ſee theſe at Chriſts right hand, they ſhall have never a word to excuſe themſelves withall: As when the Apoſtles had healed the creeple (*Acts* 3.) if the people had judged them for wicked and peſtilent men, the

creeple

creeple would have convinced them, and shewed that they were of God; if they should have cried, Root them out, the creeple would have condemned them, and told them, that they did good. And when the wicked shall see the Saints at Gods right hand, will they call them hypocrites and dissemblers? they themselves shall see, that they are sincere; will they call them Puritans? why, they shall then see that their purity stands them in good stead: then *the ungodly shall not stand in judgement, nor the sinners in the Congregation of the righteous*, Psal. 1. 6. Thus the point is clear.

The first Use then is for *instruction*, whereby we may learn, that *the Saints by their now being Saints, doe now judge the world*: if by the lives of Saints then God doth judge the world, then there is never a Saint in a town, or City, or Parish in all the Countrey, but he judgeth all the wicked that are about him: How? By living godly, by hating the sinnes of the times, by keeping his or their garments clean from the pollution of the world: For by doing this, he judgeth the world. See it in *Noah, Heb.* 11. 7. *By faith* Noah *being warned of God, as yet moved with feare, prepared an Ark for the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world.* *Vse* 1.

But some men will say, *Could* Noah *be said to condemne the world by making the Ark*? All the world did not see him when he did it. *Object.*

Beloved, *Noah* making the Ark an hundred and twenty years, though it was not seen of all, *Answ.*

yet all the world must needs *hear* of it, it being such a strange thing. Now he *condemned the world*, in that the whole world did not come unto *Noah* to enquire of him in sober sadnesse, but rather mockt him for building the Ark; they thought him to bee a *peevish melancholy man*, and not well in his wits, and so scoft at him, saying, *Will he make an Ark to swim upon dry land?* whereas they should have asked him soberly the *cause why* he did it; and if they had done so, *Noah* no question would have told them, that the wrath of heaven was upon the world, and that the floods of Gods vengeance were shortly to bee poured downe upon us: and, *because my heart hath beene naught, and I have sinned and provoked the Lords wrath, I feare if I get not into this Ark which the Lord hath commanded me for to make, I shall perish.* Now because they would not come unto *Noah* to ask him this reason, therefore the world was *condemned* by him: even so the Saints, by making an Ark for their poore soules, even by getting into Christ, (as the Ark was a type of Christ without whom none can be saved) the Saints, I say, by getting into Christ, do judge the whole world, when they hear there be men that be no swearers, and no drunkards, and that there bee men that will pray, read, heare the word, conferre of God and of Christ, and that weep and mourne for their sins, that spend their times in the mortification of their lusts, and endevour after holinesse and sanctification; the whole world, I say, is judged by them. How? why

why, they should say: Sirs, what is the matter that you doe so run after Sermons? that you keep such a stirre about getting faith and repentance more then other men? that you pray, weep, fast, and mourne, and are so strict in your works? If thus men would but come unto Gods Saints, and ask them the reason of all these things, the Saints of God would tell them, that the wrath of God would come upon them if they did not do thus: they would never be saved, if they did not thus beleeve, and thus repent, and thus pray, and walk thus holily and precisely, they should be all damned. But the world it falls a mocking and a scoffing at them, and never seeks to prevent the wrath of God; but it suddenly seiseth on them to their destruction.

Secondly, this teacheth us, that *when there is any one sinner converted from the wickednesse of his wayes, and is become a Saint, then all the world may know that there is a new Judge come to sit upon them.* Seest thou a drunkard, a swearer, a prophane person converted from his sinnes, and now walks soberly, holily, and purely? seest thou a man and a woman struck at a Sermon? Then know that unlesse thou comest out of thy sinnes, unlesse thou doest repent, and walk holily, there is a new Judge added to the rest, that shall judge thee. As our Saviour told the Pharisees, *If I through Beelzebub cast out Devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges*, Matth. 12. 27. where Christ tells them, that their children who 2.

who were his Disciples (for some of the Pharisees children did beleeve in Christ and follow him, and had power from Christ to doe the same workes that Christ did;) Now they liked it well enough in their owne children, but they could not endure it in Christ: and therefore hee tells them, that their children, whom God had converted, and to whom he had given power to doe the same workes that he did, even they shall bee their Judges to condemne them: And even so may it be with thee, thou that art a father or a mother, God having converted any of thine own children, that child shall be thy Judge and condemne thee, if thou repent not. It may be God hath converted thy brother and sister, and thou art not converted; thy own brother and sister shall condemne thee, if thou doe not repent and come out of thy sinnes.

3. Thirdly, we may learn that *it concerns all the world to take notice of every grace in Gods children,* There is never a grace of God in any of his Saints but it shall condemne the world if it be void of it. The wayes of the Lord are all judgements, because they judge them that will not walk in them. Every grace, yea the very thoughts of the righteous are called *Judgements* by *Solomon*, *Prov.* 12. You may know a crooked thing by laying it to a straight line, and by that it is judged to be crooked: so the thoughts of the righteous which are right, holy and pure, shall judge the impure, unholy, and crooked thoughts of wicked men. Is the child of God humble

humble? His humility shall judge thy pride. Is the child of God meek and patient in suffering of wrong and injuries? His meekneſſe and patience ſhall judge thy choler and revenge. Hath the child of God faith given him to beleeve in the Lord Jeſus? His faith ſhall judge thy infidelity. Hath the child of God the ſpirit of prayer given him? It ſhall condemne thee that praieſt only with thine owne ſpirit. Hath he zeale? His zeale ſhall judge thy luke-warmneſſe. Doth his ſpeech and communication adminiſter grace to the hearers? It ſhall condemne thee that ſpeakeſt of vaine and idle things. Yea, all the actions of the godly ſhall judge the wicked: and hence the Saints are ſaid *to doe Gods judgements*, Zeph. 2. 3. that is, they doe according to Gods judgements whereby he will judge the world: Thus they that do mourn, do judge them that do not mourne: they that bewaile their wickedneſſe, and the ſinnes of the times, judge them that doe not: they that faſt, weep, pray, and humble themſelves for the miſeries of the Church in theſe dreadfull dayes, they judge them that make no good conſcience of their duties.

Fourthly, learne hence, that *all the Texts of Scripture, all the whole word of God, that is it that begets theſe Saints, and therefore they muſt needs judge the world*, the word of God begets mens hearts unto ſanctification and holineſſe, whereby they become the Saints: and therefore if they, then much more ſhall the *Word* it ſelfe judge the world; and hence it is that all the 4.

words

words of God in the Scripture, are called *Judgments*, Psal. 105. 5. And our Saviour saith. *The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge you in the last day*, Joh. 12. 48. *The word that I have spoken.* where mark he doth not say, *The word which you have heard*: No there are many swearers, and drunkards, and prophane ungodly wretches, that will not come to Church to hear the word; there are many wicked men, and dead hearted worldlings, and rotten livers, that will not bee brought to hear Gods Word: it may bee at this present there is many whoremongers, drunkards, and wicked persons, that wallow in their filthinesse? in the Ale-house, Game-house, or Drab-house; or in the fields, or beds, or at their sports. Well, this word that is now a preaching, whether they will hear it or no, shall judge them at the last day. Now all the wicked in *Ashford*, that heare the word of God calling upon them to repent, and to come out of their sinnes, but will not, or out of contempt of Gods word, will absent themselves from it; this word shall judge and condemne them. There is never a drunkard, swearer, or prophane person, though his pew be empty, but this word of God that denounceth the eternal wrath and vengeance of God upon them, if they come not out of their sinnes, this word shall rise up in judgement against them and condemne them eternally. Oh that they could but hear it! but the word that I have spoken shall judge you, whether you heare it or not.

Fifth-

Fifthly and lastly, hence it follows, that *all the Ministers of God shall also judge the world.* 5.
Sonne of man (saith God to the Prophet *Ezekiel*) *wilt thou judge the bloudy City? Yea, thou shalt shew her all her abominations*, Ezek. 22. 2. As if he should have said, Sonne of man, they are drunkards, wilt thou not tell them of it? They are whoremasters, wilt thou not tell them of it? They are filthy idolaters, wilt thou not tell them of it? They live in their sinnes, and in their abomination, and wilt thou not tell them of it? Sonne of man, tell them of all their abominations, and tell them that they shall go to hell, if they repent not, tell them that they are damned men if they go on, and come not out of their sinnes: *Wilt thou not judge them (son of Man?)* Beloved, there is never a Minister in *England*, nor ever a Sermon that is preached by them, but it judgeth every Parish, and every man and woman in the congregation, that do not labour to do what is commanded them, and leave undone what is forbidden them: I say it *judgeth them*, or else it is a *judgement unto them.*

This then serves to condeme three sorts of men in the world: First, *all those that despise the Saints, and that see not amiableness in their faces.* All the Countrey doth reverence the face of the Judge when he rides circuit; Let the Judge come into the Countrey, and all the Knights, Justices, and Gentlemen in the Countrey wil go out to meet him, and bow unto him; yet these Judges are but Judges of a few rogues, male- *Use 2:*
factors,

factors and peasants of the Countrey: Alas, they are far from the dignity of the Saints? for the Saints shal judge Saints and Angels: all the world Kings and Queens, Lords and Nobles, and Captains of the Earth, the poorest Saint in Christendome shall judge them. The Apostle, or rather our Saviour saith, *to him that overcometh, and keepeth my words untill the end, to him will I give power over the Nations*, Rev. 2. 26. Whatsoever he be, if he do the works of Christ, and walk in the Ordinances of Christ, shall have power over the *Nations*, not onely to contemne their pompe and vanities, their lusts and corruptions, but also to *convince* their consciences, and to condemne their souls for ever.

2. 2. Shall the Saints judge the world? Then *what fooles are the wicked that prepare not for these Judges?* When the Judge comes to an Assise, all men prepare for him; the Constables make ready their Presentments, the Juries are warned, and the Clerks make ready their Bills, &c. lest the Judge should clap a fine upon them: and shall the Saints be Judges, and dost thou not prepare thy heart by grace? Dost thou not get purity and holinesse against that day? Surely, if thou dost not, the very Saints will judge thee unmeet for heaven, and fit only to have thy portion in hell. When Christ said, *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne*, Rev. 3. 21. He addes, *Let him that hath an eare heare*: Will God make his Saints to judge the world? Then let all wicked men give eare and heare

what

what God saith of his Church: *The Saints shall judge the world*; therefore let all men *take notice* of it, and prepare themselves for their judgement.

Lastly, *It condemnes all those that doe not see glory and majesty in the faces of Gods Saints.* 3. There is majesty in the face of a Judge; yea a man may discover in them a kinde of a soveraigne majesty. Even so the Saints of God have a majesty in their courses, in their looks, in their thoughts, and in all their wayes; and in all these they shall judge and condemne the wicked. The wicked may give the Saints nick-names and scorne, flout, contemne, and deride them now in this life, but let me tell them, that how *lightly* soever they esteeme of them, they shall be their *Judges*: They may cry out against the Saints, as long since the wicked *Sodomites* did against good *Lot*, Gen. 19. 9. *This fellow* (say they) *will be our Judge*: Why, what had *Lot* done unto them? Alas, he did nothing, but when they would have done that Sodomish villany against the two Angels that came to him, *Lot* went to them and said, *I pray you my Brethren, do not so wickedly*. So let the godly be in the company of wicked men, that abuse the good creatures of God; say, I pray you my brethren, do not so wickedly, be not drunkards, be not swearers; brethren, I pray you do not so vainly, nor so prophanely use the name of God in your mouths; I pray you my brethren, doe not prophane Gods Sabbaths; doe not lie, doe not cheat, nor cozen; if you do these and these

these things, the *wrath of God* will plague us for it, Oh then presently they cry out, *Who made you our Judges?* As once the Hebrews did of *Moses*, Act. 7. 39. Dost thou call Saints hypocrites and dissemblers, men that judge before the time? Thou foole, wert thou not as good to suffer the Saints to judge thee now, whereby thou mayst see thy wretchednesse and misery, and by faith and *speedy* repentance prevent that doome, which otherwise they tell thee will come upon thee, as hereafter, when if thou hast not repented, thou shalt never escape that doome and vengeance, to which the Saints shall judge thee? What, wilt thou not suffer them to call a drunkard a drunkard? an adulterer, an adulterer? a blasphemer, a blasphemer? a carnall man, a carnall man? a worldly man, a worldly man?

It is a pretty observation out of *Cyprian*, that because Christ did reprove all sorts of religions, and spared none, he reproved the Scribes, the Pharisees, the Lawyers, the Souldiers, &c. and yet doth not reprove the Priests, because they were Judges of the people, not because he durst not, but he would not: If thou revilest the Saints, thou revilest thy Judges. Take heed then, how thou casts the *least* aspersion upon the Saints; do not say, they are rash Judges, uncharitable censurers, dissembling hypocrites; for they shall be your Judges. O that the people would hearken & be admonished in time, to prevent this judgement. Our Saviour saith, that *this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men hate*

it

it, Joh. 3. 19. But the children of God, whom God calls *the light of the world*, these lights are come into the world, and men *love darkneſſe more then the light*. How can the wicked eſcape damnation, that have ſo many thouſand Judges to condemne them? If the malefactor that is Indicted for murther or felony, cannot eſcape condemnation, that hath but one Judge to ſit upon him: thou that art a wicked man, living in thy ſinnes without Chriſt, how canſt thou eſcape, that haſt ſo many millions of Saints to judge thee, yea from *Adam* the firſt, till the laſt Saint that ſhall be upon the earth? Surely the wicked ſhall never eſcape condemnation: for,

1. *God the Father* who judgeth by way of *authoritie*, he will condemne thee; all judgement cometh originally from him; he that hath often commanded thee to repent, and to come out of thy ſinnes, he ſhall condemne thee, becauſe thou haſt not obeyed him. 1.

2. *God the Sonne*, he will judge thee, who judgeth by way of *diſpenſation*, *Act.* 10. Firſt Chriſt preacheth to thee repentance and remiſſion of ſinnes, to which if thou yeeld not, then know, that there is a day appointed, wherein he will judge thee. That Saviour that thou ſayeſt thou deſireſt, if thou part not with thy luſts, he himſelfe will be thy Judge that will condemne thee. 2.

3. *God the holy Ghoſt* will judge thee; that Spirit that now ſtrives and wreſtles with thee, that ſuggeſts good motions into thy heart, that 3.

puts thee in minde of repentance, bidding thee leave and forsake thy sinnes, and live holily, but if thou wilt not, this Spirit shall judge thee by way of conviction.

4. 4. The *Word of God* shall judge thee, and that by way of *forme*, it being the platforme, according unto which Christ will judge the whole world. Now suppose there be forty prisoners in the Gaole together, one in for murther, another for theft, another for treason, (that man that knows the Law, if there be equitie and justice in the Assise) he, I say that knows the Law, knows who shall be hanged, or quartered, or burned, or set free; even so, Beloved, that man that looks through the Scriptures, that reads this or that Chapter, this or that sentence, may know that or this man will to hell, if he repent not. Say I this of my selfe? or sayes not the Scripture as much? *The fearfull, and unbeleeving, and all that love and make lies, shall be cast into that lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever,* Rev. 21. 8. By this text will the Lord Iesus come and judge the world: and therefore as for all such as live and dye in their sinnes, we may all know, that they shall be all damn'd in fire & brimstone for ever. Hereby I know that all they that make no conscience of *idle*, vain and earthly speeches, and reproachfull words, they shall *give an account* for them by this Text, *Mat.* 12. 56. Doth the Scripture say, that *all the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the Nations that forget God?* I know it shall be so by that text, *Psal.* 10. for all things

things shall be done according to the Scriptures *Rom.* 2. 16. *In that day* (saith the Apostle) *when God shall judge the secrets of mens hearts by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel*; that is, just as Gods Ministers preach; just as you find it written in the same Scriptures, so will he judge at that day.

Beloved, there is never a Text throughout the whole Scripture, that commads you to leave and forsake your sinnes, but it shall judge you, if you doe not: there is not one Text of Scripture, that commands performance of any holy duty, but it shall rise up in judgement against thee, if thou performe it not. Doth the Scripture say, *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excesse?* Eph. 5. 18. It shall judge and condemn the drunkard that drinks excessively. Doth the Scripture say, *Mortifie your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanesse, inordinate affection, evill concupiscence, and covetousnesse, which is Idolatry?* Col. 3. 5. If notwithstanding these sinnes live in thee, this Text shall rise up and condemne thee to hell. Doth the text say, *That the fathers to the children shall make known Gods truth*, Esa. 28. 9. Eph. 6. 4. *Parents bring up your children in the nurture and information of the Lord?* It shall rise up in judgement and condemne those parents that have not instructed their children to feare God. Doth the text say, *Thou shalt teach the word of God unto thy children* and that *thou shalt talke of it when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou goest by the way, when thou lie'st*

lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up ? Deut. 6. 7. It ſhall judge thee, becauſe thou makeſt no conſcience of *holy conference*. All theſe and the like Texts of Scripture, ſhall riſe up and ſtand in rank to condemne thee, that haſt not ſwayed thy heart, and framed thy life according to the Scriptures.

5. 5. All the *Miniſters of God* ſhall ſit as Juſtices in common (from the firſt Preacher of righteouſneſſe unto the laſt.) *Moſes* ſhall judge thee, *Joſhua, David, Eſay, Jeremy, Hoſea, Daniel, Paul, Peter, &c.* they ſhall all judge you: juſt as Gods Miniſters judge you here, ſo will God; he will take all their Sermons, and clap them upon the heads of all rebellious hearers, and ſo damn them for ever.

6. Laſtly, *The Saints* ſhall judge you; yea, all the Saints from one end of the world to the other, they ſhall aſſiſt the juſt Judge of heaven & earth, and they ſhall be interpretive Judges.

Beloved how can the wicked eſcape condemnation, that have ſo many thouſands of Judges, ſo many thouſand exhortations and reproofes, ſo many thouſand admonitions and invitations, ſo many thouſand mercies & proffers of Chriſt? When God the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghoſt, ſhall judge them, when heaven and all the Angels in heaven, and all the Saints on earth, ſhall judge them, and condemne them? How canſt thou eſcape? Is there never a drunkard in this congregation? Is there never a ſwearer? never a prophane perſon? never a mocker? never

ver a railer in this towne, that refuseth to hearken to the word? The men of Niniveh shall rise up in judgement against them, and condemne them, because they still live in their sinnes, notwithstanding they have had not *three* dayes preaching, nor *fortie* dayes space onely for repentance, *but many years of grace* calling upon them. The Queen of Sheba shall condemne many that live in these sinnes, who went many hundred miles to hear the wisedome of *Solomon* (for going and comming, it was well-nigh two thousand miles) but you have the word of Christ preached in your eares, and saying, the Kingdom of God is come among you; but you will scarce step out of your dores to receive it, or take any paines for it. This one woman shall judge them. There will be no way for the wicked to put off their judgement: then the sonnes of *Eli* shall have none to advocate between God and them, none to cloke or cover their wickednesse; they shall then have no excuses for themselves: for would they excuse themselves? the Saints shall judge them: would they send out excuses? the Saints shall cut them off.

Would they in the first place say, Alas! I was *ignorant*, I knew not how to pray, or to read, or to meditate on the Scriptures, nor to chatechize my family; I was dull and blockish to conceive such points as were taught me; and if I did live in sinne, it was ignorance that taught it me, I was never book-learned? Saith *Augustine*, this *Ignoramus* that was as ignorant and as little

book-learned as thou, he eſchewed thoſe ſinnes that thou liveſt in, got the anointing of Gods Spirit to anoint his eyes, to ſee and know the things of God, which thou haſt neglected to get; he ſhall condemne thee.

A ſecond excuſe is *poverty*. I have no means to live on; if I ſhould run after Sermons, I ſhould beg my bread: I have a great charge to keep, and nothing but my labour to maintaine them: and therefore I cannot ſpare time for *meditation*; I have no while to ſtudy the Scriptures, to pray and to mourn for my ſins, and to get grace. Well, the poore Cobler that liveth next doore to Saint *Anthony*, ſhall riſe up and condemn thee; hee was as poore as thou, and had as great a charge to keep as thou: yet hee mourned and wept, he got grace, and hee ſet time apart for prayer, reading, meditation, holy conference; he ſhall judge and condemn thee.

Thirdly, they ſhall have no excuſe by *imployment*; I am a ſervant, I am commanded to doe this or that. I find ſo much buſineſſe to follow, that I cannot find any time for ſuch things. Another ſaith, I have great imployments, I have many Irons in the fire, and therefore God, I hope, will be mercifull unto me. Well then, *Cornelius* that had as many and as great imployments as thou, and *Eleazar* (*Abrahams* ſervant) who was a ſervant as well as thou, yet in as much as they walked with God, and waited upon him in his ordinances, they ſhall judge thee.

Fourth-

Fourthly, they ſhall have no excuſe from their *callings and trades*, I am an Inne-keeper, and if I ſhould not ſuffer drinking, and ſwearing, and gaming, I ſhould not live. Another ſaith, I am a tradeſman & if I ſhould ask at firſt juſt ſo much as I could take, I ſhould never bring cuſtomers to my price, and ſo I ſhould not live of my trade. Well, *Rahab* was an Inne-keeper, as well as thou, and yet ſhee lived by faith, and did not ſuffer ſuch wickedneſſe in her houſe. So may a tradeſman, that had the ſame trade, and the ſame imployment with thee, and as great a trade as thou, and yet have avoided theſe ſinnes and evils that thou falleſt into: they ſhall judge thee.

Fifthly, they ſhall have no excuſe from the *times they live in.* Alas (ſaith one) I live in wretched times, all the world is given to ſinne. Therefore if I ſhould be ſo ſtrict and *preciſe* in my wayes, if I ſhould run after Sermons, pray, ſing Pſalmes, &c. all the world would be againſt me. There are no Profeſſors of religion but are reproached and miſcalled I ſhould loſe all my friends, I ſhould be hated and oppoſed; yea, it may be (the time beeing ſuch) I ſhould be accuſed to Councels, and have my life queſtioned; there is nothing but diſgrace and reproach, and perſecution; wherefore I was afraid, and did diſpenſe with my conſcience. Ah wretch! that man that lived in thoſe wicked times in the ſame town with thee that had the ſame hatred and reproach that thou waſt afraid of, that hath

endured all the rebukes of Christ that thou wast ashamed of, yet he went on, and continued unto the end; *he* shall judge thee.

Use 3: The use is for the *just reproof of many of the Saints of God, because they are not so circumspect* and watchfull over their wayes, as they ought. *Dost thou judge others* (saith the Apostle) *and yet dost the same things thy selfe?* Rom. 2. 2. So may I say to all such, Will you give way to sinne? will you suffer your lusts and corruptions to sway you, and not endeavour to root out or kill them rather? How wilt thou then judge the world? How wilt thou then be able to rise up in judgement against the wicked, to judge them for such sinnes wherein thou alloweſt and liveſt thy selfe? Surely God will never account thee for a *Saint*, if he cannot *judge the world* by thee. Oh this should rent the heart and bowels of those that go for Christians, that go for Saints, yet *live* not as the Saints should live. If God cannot take thee, and judge the world by thee; if he cannot take thy life, and judge the life of all Pagans, Infidels, all luke-warm earthly, and secure sinners, he will not account thee for a *Saint*. This then first condemnes all unholineſſe in the lives of them that be Saints. Beloved, if we did but live like the Saints of God in holineſſe and purity in the wayes of God, the Lord would put such splendor and glory upon us, that would even daunt the very face of our enemies, and make them stand amazed at Saints. But it is the contrary with us, the glory of God

is

is departed from us, *Spain*, *France*, and other Nations fear us not : Why? The righteousnesse and purity of *Religion* is departed from us. For you shall have a Saint come into the company of a wicked man, and yet the swearer will not be afraid to swear before him : the drunkard will not be afraid to bee drunk before him: the filthy speaker will not be afraid to utter rotten speeches before him : the lier will not be afraid to lie before him ; the worldly man will not be afraid to discover his vanities before him by his carnall and filthy conference. Beloved, all this is, because the Saints have lost their glory; if they did live as Saints ought to live, the wicked would tremble to work wickednesse before them. Though a wicked man be a drunkard, and abuse the good creatures of God when no Saint is in his company, yet if a Saint were present, he would tremble, and not dare to do it. Though he were a swearer, a filthy talker, a vain worldling amongst his *companions*; yet if he come in the *Saints* company, and the Saints stand in Gods counsell, then would the wicked tremble and quake to do such things: then would they lick in their tongues, and not dare to speak such blasphemous oathes, such vain and unprofitable words, filthie lies and slanders. It is said of those that gladly received the Apostles words, and were added to the Church, that *the fear of them came upon the world*, Acts 2.41. What, did the Disciples go with swords and guns, &c. to keep men in awe thereby?

by? No, *they continued in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship*, and did live according thereto, and this made all the world afraid of them.

Secondly, *this condemnes the little difference that is betwixt the wicked of the world, and some Saints in their lives and manners*: Beloved, is there so little difference between the Judge and the prisoners, that any one need to come and say, I pray you Sir, shew me which is the Judge, and which is the malefactor? Is there not a plaine difference both in the apparell and carriage? The one is in rich apparell, and the other in stinking and filthy cloathes, having his hands manicled, or his legges chained. But it is to be feared, that many of the Saints have neglected holinesse and purity in their carriage and actions which they performe, that one can hardly tell which is a Saint, and which is a reprobate. If a man deale with a Saint, and deale with a wicked man, he seeth no difference between them. Let a Saint do any action, either pray, hear, or conferre, let a wicked man do the like, there is such deadnes, such carnality, such worldly-mindednesse, such luke-warmnesse of affection, that one can hardly tell which is the Saint and which is the hypocrite. Beloved, if the Saints did live like Saints, there would be as plaine a difference between a Saint and a wicked man, in their lives and behaviour, as is betwixt the Judge and the Rogue that is to be judged by him. *Hast thou not considered my servant Iob*, (saith God) *how that there is none like him in all the earth?*

earth? Iob 1. 4. 8. If a man come to be a Saint indeed, there is never a wicked man in the Town and Countrey, that lives and doth as he doth, and walks as he walks, nor prayes as he prayes, nor hears the word as he hears it, nor that conferres or meditates as he doth, that beleeves and repents as he doth, that strives against his lusts as he doth: there is none like him in all the world.

Thirdly, *it condemnes the scandalousnesse of many Professors in their behaviours and actions.* Oh how do wicked men insult and exclaim hereupon, to see a Professor led away and overcome by some lust! What (say they) are these they that are led by the Spirit of God? Are these your devout men? why, they can covet and scrape as well as others; they can cousen and lie as well as others. I, those that are your great Professors, and hot spurres, they are as covetous, as worldly, as cruell as others, though they will not be drunk, nor swear, yet they will cousen and lie, as well as others. The consideration whereof made the Prophets heart to bleed in him, and to pray, Oh purge me from my murder and adultery, and all other my secret sinnes, lest I cast mire and dirt in the faces of thy children, causing them to beare the reproaches of my sinnes. *Oh let not those that seeke thee, be ashamed for my sake,* Psal. 69. For thy sake that livest scandalously and offensively, for thy sake that livest covetously and scraping after the world, that art so unjust in thy dealings and promises, mire and

dirt.

dirt, ſcandals and reproaches are caſt upon the children. For thy looſeneſſe, yea for thy carnall liberty it is that the true profeſſors of Religion are reproached, ſuſpected, and hardly cenſured in the world. What did *Jacob* when he was to walk with the people of the Land? *Gen.* 35. 5. 6. he purged his houſe, and (ſaith the text) *the terror of God was upon all the Cities*, hee made them all to tremble at him. I tell you, all the wicked in *Aſhford* would tremble at the Profeſſors that live therein, if they did live and carry themſelves like *Saints indeed*. Oh if all thoſe that did profeſſe themſelves to be Chriſtians, were Chriſtians indeed; and that profeſſe themſelves to be Saints, were Saints indeed, living in the power and ſanctification of holineſſe; then men would ſay of themſelves, of a truth God is in theſe men, Chriſt dwels in them, and the Spirit of God leads and governs them indeed. If thou wouldſt judge the world, take heed ſo as the world judgeth thee, and ſo thou with the world be condemned eternally. It is ſaid that *Herod feared* John, *becauſe he was a juſt man*, Mark 6. 23. So if all thy neighbours did know that thou wert a juſt man, a holy and conſcionable man in all thy wayes, and in all thy actions, and that cannot indure ſwearing, lying, and deceit; but did ſee that thou waſt juſt, and one that feared God truly, they would all fear thee.

THE PUNISHMENT Of Unworthy COMMUNICANTS At the TABLE of the LORD:

DELIVERED

In a SERMON Preached, *Decemb.* 7. 1628.

By that vigilant and painfull Minister of the Word,

WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.
Sometime Fellow of *Pembroke Hall* in *Cambridge*, and late Parson of *Rochford* in *Essex*.

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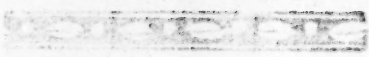

A SERMON OF

Mr. WILLIAM FENNERS

Upon this ensuing Text.

1 COR. 11.30.

For this cause many are weak and sick among you and many sleep.

THE Apostle in this Chapter taxeth two abuses which were then amongst the *Corinthians*: First, *the unseemly habit of women* in the Congregation, from the first *ver.* to the 17. Secondly, *the prophane usage of the holy Communion*, both of men and women, from the 17. verse to the end of the Chapter: And herein, from the 23. verse to the end of the 25. he sets down the Institution of the Lords Supper; and thence raised a point of *Doctrine.*

That *whosoever would come to this holy Communion, they must examine themselves*, that so they may *Doct.* 1.

may come worthily; else it were better that they never came.

So we read in the 28. verse; *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup*: As if the Apostle had said, Unlesse a man *examine* himself, and search his own heart, and find out his sinnes, and dive into the secrets of his soul, to bring out his hidden corruptions, confessing them and judging himselfe for them before the Lord, let him never presume to come unto this *holy* Sacrament.

And then he proves it by three Reasons.

Reas. 1. The first is taken from *the end of the Sacrament*; for it is the remembrance of the death and passion of Christ: so it is in the 26. verse, *So oft as you eate of this Bread and Drink of this Cup, you show forth the Lords death till he come.* It is a reason that the men of this world are not acquainted withall, and therefore it was a good wish of a Reverend Father, that the Sacrament should never be ministred, but there should be a Sermon, to teach men the nature of it, and to instruct them in the Mystery thereof. Wee approach unto the Sacrament hand over head, living in our sinnes, not showing by our coming, that Christ is dead; we say, and we professe that Christ died for our sinnes, and yet notwithstaning our sinnes live in us, as if Christ had not died for us, or as if we would proclaime, that his death hath had no effect in us. For were we dead with Christ, then sin and the living occasions of sinne, would be dead in us also. My Beloved, we should

should never come to this Sacrament, but we should shew forth the Lords death thereby, that is, that Christ is dead (or, rather died) for sinne, and that sinne is also dead in us.

The second reason is taken from *the damned wrong wee offer unto Christ*, if we come in our sinnes, for we are *guilty of the body and bloud of Christ*, as it is in the 27. verse; nay, thou sinnest against the Lord Jesus Christ, not a jot lesse, then *Pilat* that condemned him, then *Judas* that betrayed him, and the *Jewes* that cryed out, *Crucifie him, crucifie him*; yea, thou art as much guilty, as if thy own hand in thy own person had been imbrued in his bloud. Now we know it is a horrible sin to be guilty of the bloud and murther of an ordinary man, yea of a very rogue; how much more is it a great and fearfull sin to be guilty of the body and bloud of the Lord Iesus Christ, the onely and eternall Son of God? yet comest thou to this holy Communion, and bringest no lesse then the guilt of the body and bloud of Christ upon thy soule? *Reas.* 2.

The third Reason is taken from *the wofull wrong and injury that man brings upon his own soule, that comes unpreparedly without examination of himself*; in the 20. verse, *he eateth and drinketh his own damnation*; that is, he maketh himselfe guilty of, and liable to the same vengeance that the crucifiers of Christ had inflicted on them. *Good had it been for that man* (saith Christ of *Judas*) *if that he had never been born*: So may I say, Good had it been for that man and that woman, *Reas.* 3.

man, if they had never been born, who come unworthily unto the Table of the Lord; for when they eat of that Bread they eate their owne bane; and when they drink of that Cup, they drink their own damnation.

Vse 1. Then commeth he to make some vses of this point; and first *he condemns those that as they come, so they goe away from the Sacrament*; no more holy, no more gracious then before; but as they come in their sins, so they goe away in their sins; they came drunkards, and they goe away drunkards; they came worldlings, and they goe away worldlings; they came mockers, and they goe away mockers: they came in their wrath, anger, malice, deadnesse, hypocrisie, and lukewarmnesse and so they go away, still never the better, but living in them as they did before: As in the 17. verse. *You come together* (saith the Apostle) *not for the better, but for the worse*: Whereas if they would have come worthily, they should have gone away the better, they should have received more grace and holinesse to walk with God, more power and strength against sin, and corruption; yea, the Lord would have ratified and confirmed his Covenant with them; whereas living in contention, and not coming with *preparation*, they grow the worse by the Sacrament. The *Corinthians* thought that the Apostle would have praised them for their coming to Church, and receiving the Sacrament: *Shall I praise you? in this* (saith the Apostle) *I praise you not*,

Secondly,

Secondly, He makes *an use of terror against all those that dare come in their sinnes unto this holy Sacrament of the Lord*; for that man that commeth in his sinnes unto the Table of the Lord, 1. though he may think he receives the communion, yet he doth not: for this is not the Table of the Lord, but the Table of Devils. It is true, thou receivest the Sacrament of the body and bloud of Christ; but yet comming in thy sinnes, thou receivest not his body and bloud, as of a Saviour to save thee from thy sinnes: Indeed thou receivest the body and bloud of Christ sacramentally; but it is as the Iudge to condemne thee unto the pit of destruction, for thy damned Impudency in coming so unworthily unto this holy Sacrament. For that man cannot eate the body of Christ, that is not a member of Christ; therefore thou must be a limbe of Christ, if ever thou wilt receive worthily. *Vse 2.*

2. If a man come unto the Sacrament, and come in his sinnes, he cometh to his own *destruction*: for though it be a sweet banquet for to refresh an humble and weary soule, and to make it walk more cheerfully in the wayes of God all the dayes of his life: yet he that commeth unto it in his sinnes, and receiveth it in his uncleanesse, speedeth thereby his own damnation, and receiveth it as his *viaticum* to hell. The Apostle compares *Baptisme* to the *red Sea*, 1. Cor. 10. from which place *Chrysostome* saith, that as the red Sea was away for the Israelites to passe through to Canaan, so it was as a grave to swallow

swallow up the Egyptians to their destruction: So the Lords Supper is as a grave or open pit whereby many plunge themselves into eternall destruction but as a chariot to the godly to carry them to heaven.

Vse 3. Thirdly, by *comming in thy sinnes, thou makest thy self liable to Gods temporary plagues and judgements*; as appeares in my Text, *For this cause many are sick and weak among you, and many are fallen asleep*, [For this cause] which is not only a note of conclusion, but of the cause: *For this cause*, namely, because they examine not themselves, but come in their sinnes and receive it unworthily. One man hath a disease in his body, that he liveth not out halfe his dayes; another sick and weak neer unto death; a third is fallen asleep. Wherefore? why (saith the Apostle) for this cause of receiving unworthily the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

Vse 4. Fourthly, *for instruction*, that because the people of God as well as wicked men, are guilty of unworthy comming to the Lords Table, therefore *he exhorts them, that if they would not have the Lord judge them, that they would judge themselves*, as in the 31. verse. *For if wee would judge our selves, we should not be judged of the Lord.* If we would sit down and search our own hearts, and trie our own spirits, and pry into our bosomes, and out with our old corruptions, and unclean lusts and enter into a new covenant with God, of holy walking before him for after time, if we would thus judge and con-

condemne our ſelves, and mortifie our ſinnes, comming with grace unto this holy banquet, then we might come with comfort unto this bleſſed Sacrament, aſſuring our ſelves that wee ſhall eſcape the judgment of the Lord. For thoſe of the Corinthians whom God ſtruck with ſickneſſe, weakneſſe, and death, it was to inſtruct others that are well and in health, that they venture not to enter upon theſe holy myſteries with unholy hearts, and unclean hands.

Fifthly, he concludeth with a *uſe of exhortation* in the 33. and 34. verſes: *Wherefore brethren, when ye come together to partake of the holy Communion, tarry one for another*: As if he ſhould have ſaid, Away with all your diſorders, and come not with a temporall, but with a ſpiritual appetite; provide not thy teeth, but thy heart for theſe dainties: for this is not a feaſt for the body, but for the *ſoul* therfore away with all your diſorders and unſeemly coming unto thi bleſſed Sacrament, take heed and repent of this ſin among you, and of all other ſins which you know your own conſciences to be guilty of, and ſo come unto this holy communion. *Uſe* 5.

Now, *the verſe that I have read to you, is a part of that uſe of terror which the Apoſtle makes againſt the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament*; and it contains Gods ſevere hand and judgment againſt thoſe that come unworthily: wherein note *three* things,

Firſt, *the cauſe of their puniſhment*, which is the unworthy eating of the Communion: *For*

this cause many are sick and weak among you and many are fallen asleep,

2. Secondly, *the punishment inflicted for* this sinne, *weaknesse, sicknesse,* and *mortality*: For it seems (saith *Peter Martyr*) that the Lord sent a sore plague and pestilence among them for to revenge himself of them for their abuse of the Sacrament for this cause.

3. Thirdly, there is *the delinquents*, which are you Corinthians: *Many are sick and weak among you*, and in them all others that come unpreparedly to the Sacrament.

Chrysostome notes here, that our Apostle doth not fetch here an Argument or example of judgment from others, as he had done in the former chapter, but he brings it from themselves, who sensibly felt the wrath of God upon them for this very sinne: As if the Apostle should have said How is it, O *Corinthians*, that you dare venture to come unto the Communion so unpreparedly, and that you have no more regard of so weighty businesse as is the receiving of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ? See you not the wrath of God upon *your* dwellings, and the curse of heaven to take hold of your towne? you see it this very time, that some are weak and very sick amongst you, neer unto death, and others have been struck with death before your eyes, and the wrath of God is not removed, but lies yet upon you: What will you *alwayes* goe on, and never cease to provoke the Lord to indignation and wrath against you for your sinnes, untill

untill his jealousie hath utterly consumed you, and clean cut you off? And howsoever many of you may think that this sickness, weakness, and mortality comes upon you by chance, as from the *infection of the aire*, or other *secondary* causes, I tell you nay, but it is for *this* cause onely, even *your unworthy comming to the Supper of the Lord.* Whence we may observe this point of instruction:

That *God doth most severely punish the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.* *Doct. 2.*

He punished the Corinthians here with sickness, weakness, feavers pestilence, death temporal, and God knows how many with death eternal. *Theodoret* observes, that the Apostle told them of a thing that was acted amongst *them*, for if he had told them of such judgements as had been hid from them, and not manifest before their eyes, as if they had not felt the sickness in their bodies, and heard the bels tolling daily in their ears, they might have thought that the Apostle had but lied unto them. So the people of Israel, as we may read in 1 Cor. 1. 2. 3. verses, *they were baptized in the Cloud and in the Sea, and they did all eat the same spirituall meat and drink the same spirituall drink*; yet as it is in the fifth verse, *with many of them God was not well pleased.* Nay, God was so wroth with them, that within the space of fourty yeares, many thousands of them were destroyedby death here and God knoweth how many thousands of them in

hell. For God speaketh of *hell*, as well as of *death*; and their sin was so great, that it made God confirme it with *an oath*, that they should *never enter into his rest*. And Saint *Cyprian* saith, that the Lord hath shewed many miracles, and declared many fearfull judgements upon the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament.

Judas, who *Ambrose* thought received the Sacrament (though *Hilary* and others that hee did not, but only that he did eate the Passeover, and was coming to this Sacrament also) but see his doome, *John* 13. as soon as ever he received the sop, *the Devill entred into him*; and so it is with all such as come to the Communion in their sinnes without repentance, and unfained resolution of walking ever after worthy of the Sacrament; I say unto all and every one of them, that as soone as ever thou receivest the Bread and Wine into thy mouth, thou receivest the Devil together with it; as soon as ever it goeth down into thy body, the Devill goeth after it, and taketh more full possession of thy heart and soul.

Reas. 1. Now the reason why the Lord doth so severely punish both with temporall judgements, and with spirituall curses, the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament, is, *in regard of the author of the Sacrament*, who is Christ: and that not onely as he was *man*, (as the Papists would make us beleeve) but Christ as he was *God* did institute the same. So saith the Apostle in the 23. verse, *The Lord Jesus Christ in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and brake it, when he had given thanks,*

thanks, and said, Take yee, and eate yee, for this is my body which is broken for you. Now if the Lord Jesus did institute it, what a cursed thing is it for any to defile it, and so sin against Christ? It is a damnable thing to sinne against *God*; but to sin against *God, as he is God in Christ,* is damnably damnable. The holy Ghost in the second Psalm exhorts *to kisse the Sonne lest he be angry, and so thou perish:* As if he should say, Adore the Sonne, Adore the Lord Iesus Christ, and so come and eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup: for if he be angry, thou wilt surely perish; and if thou sin against God, and so go out of the way, Christ upon thy repentance will set thee in again; but if thou sinnest against God in Christ, who is the Way, the Life, and the Truth, thou shalt surely perish from the right way: for there is no other way for to bring thee in again, *Acts* 4.12. Therefore wofull is thy case, and miserable is thy condition if thou sinnest against Christ, prophaning his holy ordinances which he himself hath instituted, and abusest and despisest that blessed Spirit of his, that comes to seale unto thee the redemption that he hath purchased by his bloud. Better had it been for thee that thou hadst never been born: for if he be *wroth, blessed* only *are all they that put their trust in him,* and come *preparedly,* unto his holy Ordinance, and that by faith embrace the Lord Iesus Christ. But woe unto all prophane persons that live in their sinnes: if his wrath be but a little kindled, then woe to all drunkards, swearers, and uncleane persons; but

blessed

blessed is that man that is come out of his sinnes. For if his wrath be so terrible when it is but *a little* kindled, O how much more fearfull will it be when it is deeply incensed! Therefore if thou comest unto this holy Sacrament in thy sinnes, without due *preparation* and *examination*, what doest thou but even set the wrath of God burning upon thy soul and body from the very bottome of hell?

When the Lord Delivered the *Law* upon Mount *Sinai*, he commanded the people to *sanctifie* themselves; yea if a beast did but touch the mountain, he must die for the same, even be stoned to death, or thrust through with a dart, *Heb.* 12. Much more then now, when the Lord doth deliver the *Gospel*, especially the groundwork and master-peece thereof, the Lord Jesus Christ, and that in the most blessedest manner that ever God exhibited himselfe unto man; how much more doth God require purity and holinesse, that all such as come to receive the Lord Jesus Christ in the blessed Sacrament, should be sanctified, purging their hearts, and cleansing soules from all their sin and uncleanneſſe? Should not a beast touch the mountaine where God did appeare, and dareſt thou touch the body of Christ, and drink his blessed bloud in thy sinnes? The very Angels of heaven will curse thee, and the clouds of heaven will poure down showres of vengeance upon thee: for God hath more severe punishments to inflict upon sinners under the Gospel, then he used under the Law, though

though then he ſtruck them with more *viſible* and ſenſible plagues and judgements then *ordinarily* he bringeth upon men now: as *Gehezi* for his covetouſneſſe was ſtrucken with leproſie; *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, the earth opened her mouth and ſwallowed them up quick for their rebellion againſt the Lord: *Er* and *Onan* were ſtrucken dead for their wickedneſſe: *Jeroboam* had his hand withered for ſtretching of it forth to ſtrike the Lords Prophet. And though the Lord bring not ſuch *ſenſible* puniſhments now as he did then, ye he knowes how to puniſh the world a thouſand times more then he did then, at this time. As a father hath other kinds of puniſhments for his ſonne, when he is *grown up*, then he had when he was in coates, and but a *child*; then a twigge or two would ſerve the turne; but if he comes to mans eſtate, and then *rebell* againſt his father, it may be that he will diſinherit him, and caſt him out of his family: So in former time God did ſcourge and whip his people when they ſinned againſt him; but now he hath drawn out his Church to this age, even to the age of the Goſpel, he hath ſeverer ſtrokes of plagues and curſes, wherewith to confound all prophane and impenitent ſinners, that dare to abuſe that bleſſed Sacrament of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

The ſecond Reaſon is, *in regard of the matter of the Sacrament*, which is Chriſt alſo; who as he was the efficient cauſe, ſo in regard of Sacramentall relation, he is the matter of the Communion,

munion, 1 Cor. 10. 16. *The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ? and the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* Now the better matter any thing is of, the more heynous is the defilement of it: A master will not be so angry for casting his earthen vessels into the mire, as he will be for casting his rich jewels. The Bread and Wine in the Sacrament, are the blessed Communion of the precious body and bloud of Christ, and darest thou to defile them? Knowest thou not that thou dost greatly increase the wrath of the Lord against thy soule thereby? That soule *whatever it was* from *Dan* to *Beersheba*, that came in his *uncleanesse* to partake of any of those *holy* things which the children of *Israel* hallowed to the Lord, whether he were man or woman, rich or poore, that person was to be *cut off* from the presence of the Lord, *Levit.* 12. whereto the Lord sets his seale for the confirmation thereof *(I am the Lord:)* And as sure as I am the Lord, so will I see it accomplished. So my beloved, let me say unto you of *England*, from *Dover* to *Newcastle*, or from the one end of the town unto the other, that soul who toucheth any of these holy things with an impure heart, and cometh to partake of them with his uncleanesse upon him, living in his sinnes, and wallowing in his lusts, casting off the feare of the Lord, and making no conscience to walk in Gods wayes, that soule shall surely be cut off that cometh so unworthily unto the Table of the

the Lord; not only the hand that taketh it, and the mouth that eateth it, but even the *very soul* of him that so cometh, shall perish from the presence of the Lord. So *Levit.* 7. 20. *That soule that eateth of the flesh of the Sacrifices of peace offerings that pertaine unto the Lord, having his uncleannesse upon him, even that soule shall be cut off from his people.* Now you know that all those sacrifices had relation unto Christ; but yet under the Law they were but shadowes, and typicall relations, and were not so lively and effectuall means for the exhibiting of Christ, as the Lords Supper, is: And therefore if such as came in their *uncleannesse* unto them, were punished with no lesse punishment then a *cutting off* from the fellowship with the Lords people; what wrath and vengeance will the Lord bring upon thee that comest with thy uncleannes upon thee unto *this* holy communion? *Augustine* saith, that man that receiveth the Sacrament unworthily, receiveth a greater plague to his own soule, and a greater torment to his own conscience, yea and heapeth up a store of wrath unto himself against the day of wrath. Me thinkes thou that livest in thy sinnes, and wilt not come out of them, when thou heares these words [*This is my body*] and seest the bread broken before thy face, it should even make thee tremble and quake for to look upon it, more for to touch it, and most of all for to tast it: for *it is the Communion of the body and blood of Christ*; and how dares thou come in thy sins for to defile it? *Reas.* 4.

Reas. 3. A third Reason is, *in regard of the forme of the Sacrament*, which is Christ too, for as he is the efficient cause that instituted it, and as he is also the matter of the Sacrament, so in the third place Christ is the *forme* of the Sacrament also, wherein the confirming grace of God is sealed up unto thee. Now as it is treason for a man to offer contempt unto the Kings broad Seale, so certainly is it high treason against this King of Kings, to contemne this blessed Sacrament, which is the *Seale* of the righteousnesse of faith. If thou shouldst clip the Kings Coine, I will say that thou art a Traytor. Oh what a traitor art thou then, yea, an accursed traitor in the account of God and Christ, if thou clippest his holy Communion, if thou clip it of thy examination, and due preparation, and so come hand over head, not regarding so holy an Ordinance! Thou sinnest against the Court of heaven. That which Saint *James* speaks in generall of the whole worship of God [*Draw neere unto God*] let me apply it in particular unto this drawing neere unto God in this holy Communion, *James* 4. 8. *Cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purifie your hearts ye double minded.* Draw neer unto God in the hearing, reading and meditating on Gods word; draw neer unto God in prayer, and in this holy Sacrament, and receive it for your amendment of life. [*Draw neere to God*] I, that I will, (saith the wicked man) I will come to Church, & draw neer unto the holy Communion. Will you so? (saith the Apostle)

Apostle:) No, first, *Cleanse your hands yee sinners, and purge your hearts yee double-minded:* As if hee should say, never think of drawing neer unto God, or setting foot on this holy ground, and handling those holy mysteries of Christ, unlesse thou first purge thy heart, and cleanse thy soule from all thy filthy lusts and cursed corruptions, lest otherwise thou coming in thy sinnes with thy uncleannesse on thee, and so receiving *unworthily*, thou eatest and drinkest thine owne *damnation*, (as our English translation hath it) damnation to thy selfe, and not to another. No, God forbid, that thou shouldest by thy unworthy coming, eate and drink condemnation to another, for thou that art a child of God, and comest unto the Table of the Lord with *repentance*, and a found measure of *preparation*, though others that sit in the same pew with thee, for their prophanesse eate and drink their own damnation, yet *thou* shalt be sure to receive the *seale* and assurance of *thy reconciliation* and salvation, with free acceptance of God, through the Lord Jesus Christ; for every man shall bear his owne burden.

The last Reason is, *in regard of the end of the Sacrament*, which is Christ also: For as he is the efficient, materiall, and formall cause, so Christ is also the finall cause of the Sacrament: So it is in the 26. verse, *As oft as you eate of this Bread, and drink of this Cup, you shew forth the Lords death untill he come.* Not that Christ may be eaten with the teeth, or corporally received in the Sacra- *Reas.* 4.

Sacrament, or as if he were there productively, or *transubstantially*, (as the Papists say); no, the Apostle shewes, that the end of the celebration of this Sacrament, is for to shew forth the death of Christ untill he come.

Object. But (say the Romists) *unlesse we eate the body, and drink the blood of Christ really, and not the consecrated bread and wine, how can any man by this unworthy communicating, eate and drink his own damnation, and make himself guilty of the body and blood of Christ.*

Answ. I answer, a man cannot bring this guilt upon himself by eating a peece of bread, or drinking a cup of wine; but the Apostle hath an answer so fitted for this, as that all the Papists in the world shall never be able to gainsay; and therefore I pray you to mark it: for he hath joyned these two verses together; *As oft as you eate of this bread, and drink of this cup, you shew forth the Lords death till hee come: Wherefore whosoever eateth this bread or drinketh this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*; even for this cause, because it is the shewing forth of Christs death till hee come. Therefore if thou eatest and drinkest *unworthily*, comming in thy sinnes, and resolvest to goe on in them, that as thou wert proud before thou camest to the Sacrament, so thou art still; as thou wert cholerick, angry, and impatient before, so thou art still; as thou wert luke-warme and dead-hearted in Gods service before, so thou remainest still, remember I pray thee, that

as

as oft as thou haſt come unto the communion in thoſe thy ſinnes, thou haſt made thy ſelf guilty of the body and blood of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Therfore I beſeech you to look to it, and in time to repent, and pray with the Prophet *David*, *Pſ.* 51. *Deliver me from blood-guiltineſſe, O Lord*, even from the blood of thy Sonne, leſt one day it bee laid unto thy charge, and required ſtraitly at thy hands. *For, for this cauſe many are ſick among you, and many weak.*

Is it ſo then, that the Lord doth ſo ſeverely puniſh the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament? *Take notice* (I pray you) *then from whence commeth all ſickneſſe, weakneſſe, and mortality*, and the reaſon why the Lord doth ſend ſo many kind of ſorrowes, croſſes, and miſeries upon men; namely, becauſe of the unworthy receiving of the Lords Supper. So ſaith Mr. *Calvin*, why doe you wonder to ſee ſuch wartes, and rumours of warres, that there is ſo many bloodſheds, ſo many Townes and Cities ruinated, and ſo many Countries ſacked and depopulated, ſo many calamities come upon the Churches abroad, & ſo many plagues and ſcourges to over-run Chriſtendome at this day, is not the cauſe plain enough? men come unto the Table of the Lord carelefly and unworthily. And, beloved, we ſhall never ſee the Lord take away his judgements here from the earth, untill we betake our ſelvs to a more diligent and holy receiving of the Sacrament. For this very cauſe there are ſo many ſtrange diſeaſes amongſt us,

Uſe 1.

never formerly known or heard of untill these dayes, as the French Pox, the English Sweat, (as they call it) that even the Physitians themselves are blunted at them; and (as *Peter Martyr* well observes) hence are all diseases, as plagues, pestilences, (which were late amongst us) dropsies, bloody Flux, Agues, Apoplexies, Convulsies, burning Feavers, and impostumes, &c. and all for this cause. One man hath fallen into a Feaver, and we wonder at the cause whence he took it; but in truth the communion hath cast him into his Feaver, and the Lord will avenge himself on him for the same. Another is sick, and he thinkes that a cold hath brought it upon him; but it is the unworthy receiving of the Sacrament that is truely the cause of it. A third man dieth before his time, even in his full strength, before in the course of nature he hath ended halfe his dayes; but the cause is unworthy comming to the Communion, which hath taken hold of him, and cut off the thread of his life.

Many there be that expound these words in a *spirituall* sense, *Many are sick and weak, and many are fallen asleep*, that is to say, many have their consciences seared, and their hearts hardned, &c. and this is true also, that because men come unpreparedly, they have their hearts hardened, and their consciences seared, and their soules plagued with many spirituall plagues. But it is as true also in *temporall* judgements, thou hast had many afflictions, and much sickness laid

laid upon thee; but thank thy ſelf for it; namely, becauſe thou haſt come unworthily unto the communion, thou haſt had much weakneſſe in thy body, which hath coſt thee much mony, and weakned thy eſtate; but thy unholy comming unto the Sacrament, is that which thou mayeſt thank for it. Thou haſt been reproached and contemned, and endured much ſhame; but take notice of it, that it proceeds from the fore-going cauſe, and that is a ſpeciall reaſon why the Lord hath brought theſe and many other evils upon thee. Thou canſt ſay the commandements (for the moſt part) by rote; but thou didſt never know the myſtery of this one commandement, *Thou ſhalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain:* Beloved: the Communion is one of Gods own names, and how many thouſands are there in the world that take this name of God in vain? Is there never a drunkard here in this congregation, that hath been at the Sacrament? Is there never a whoremonger, never a covetous worldling? Where is the man, whoſoever hee bee amongſt you all, that is ſuch a one? He is in the ſtate of damnation. Is there never a luke-warm and carnall Chriſtian, that contents himſelf with a formall worſhip, and a dead performance of holy duties, that hath no zeal for God, nor courage for his truth, but is careleſſe of all Gods commandements? whoſoever amongſt you are guilty of theſe ſins, or any other, and hath come unto this holy Communion in them, they are the perſons, that how oft ſoever they have received,

so oft they have taken this name of the Lord in vain: And if I should examine this Congregation from the one end of it unto the other, I fear that every pew would yeeld some one, If not many that have taken a Cõmunion (which is one of *Gods names*) in vain. Should I but examine thee that comest unto the Communion this day, how by the last Sacrament thou receivedst, and the last Sermon thou hast heard, thy faith is strengthened, thy repentance renewed, and thy obedience is increased, and thy care doubled for to walk with God? whether thou art made by them more zealous for God, more forward in his worship and service, and every day more holy and heavenly minded; if not, then thou hast taken this *Name of the Lord thy God in vain*, and *the Lord will not hold thee guiltlesse*, that is, the Lord will not take away the guilt from thy conscience, but he will let thy sinne lie open, and thou shalt not be cleansed from it nor justified by the very blood of Jesus Christ, but it shall rest upon thee to thy utter ruine and destruction, unlesse thou forsake thy sinnes, and so come preparedly unto this holy Table and banquet. I know here is a covenant of grace, a sweet refreshing for every humbled soul that is hungry & broken for his sinnes and for every poore distressed conscience: let all such come and lay their sinnes upon Christs crosse, and welcome: But if there be any that come in their sinnes, and will not *reforme* their lives, but be as they came sinners, so they mean for to continue, the Lord himselfe will

will lay this mans sinnes upon his own head, and they shall never be taken away from him but Christ shall at the day of judgement pronounce him a guilty person, to his eternall condemnation.

King *Belshazzar* that abused but the holy vessels of the Temple, and the Cups thereof, what a dismall plague befell him for it? *Dan.* 5. 27. 28. *God hath numbred thy Kingdome and finished it, thou art weighed in the ballance, and art found too light, thy Kingdome is departed from thee, and is given to the Medes and Persians.* So (beloved brethren) if any of you shall abuse this Cup of the Lord comming to it with a filthy unclean heart, and polluted conscience, and earthly affections, there is a hand-writing against every soule that thus commeth this day unto the Table of the Lord: thou art numbred and weighed and found too light: thou, O man, and woman, whosoever thou art that prophanest and contemnest these holy things of God, thou shalt be found out, and the Lord will keep thee out by his spirituall plagues, and thy sinne shall never be done away, but be required at thy hands, and stand in everlasting record against thee; O my brethren, that you would but seriously consider of it, and look about you, it being so weighty a thing that so neerly concernes every one of you.

But I would not have any poor broken heart and humble soul to mistake me, and so thereby be discouraged: but give me leave (I pray you) for to use the words of the Prophet, though spo-

ken in another ſenſe, *Pſal.* 115. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the glory:* So let me apply this doctrine unto the comfort of all poore broken hearted ſinners, and beat off all carnall prophane wretches that live in their ſinnes; not unto you, O drunkards, and ſwaggerers, not unto you whoremaſters and unclean perſons, that wallow in ungodlineſſe, I ſay not unto you, but unto the poor afflicted ſoul and contrite ſpirit that lieth bleeding and gaſping under the weight of his ſin, and that trembles and fears being oppreſt with the ſenſe of its own unworthineſſe, panting and breathing after Chriſt Jeſus, and ſuing earneſtly unto the Throne of grace for mercie and forgiveneſſe: unto thee only belongs this comfort, and therefore take it home to thee, and know it for thy ſelfe. Art thou troubled with a hard heart, and an unbeleeving ſoule, and art even wearied and tired out with thy many ſinnes and infirmities? Come thou with comfort unto this holy Communion: for thou ſhalt be ſure to finde ſaving good by it; to thee it ſhall be a ſpirituall medicine to heale all thy diſeaſes, and to cure all thy ſtrong and prevailing corruptions; and if thou come unto this holy Table of the Lord, it ſhall make thee as it is recorded of Saint *Laurence*, able to ſuffer Martyrdome, and to get victory over all thy unruly affections; yea at laſt thou ſhalt tread Satan thy arch-enemy under thy feet. Therefore be not diſmaied: for the Lord Jeſus invites thee to come. What if thy infirmities be many, yet the

the mercies of God, which he tenders to thee in this Communion, are many more. *Samſon* who was the ſtrongeſt Souldier and Champion in his time that was in *Iſrael* to overcome the Philiſtims, he yet began his ſtrength in weakneſſe, being at the firſt overcome by a woman: So though the Lord intend to make thee a ſtrong Chriſtian, he will make thee to begin in weakneſſe to perfect thy power; to begin in ſinne and miſery, that he may make thee to end in glory. I know Gods children here may receive temporall puniſhments, and bring temporall ſcourges upon themſelves, as we may ſee amongſt the Corinthians here, but it ſhall be for their good and amendment; namely, for their correction, and not for their ruine and deſtruction, that ſo being chaſtened by the Lord, they might not be condemned with the world. Therefore if thou commeſt careleſſy and unprofitably, God will chaſtiſe thee with the rods of men, as he did *Peter*, who receiving the Sacrament with his Maſter over night, yet the next day thrice denied him; but God whipt his ſoule, and ſcourged his conſcience for it, and beat him black and blew, ſo that he *went out and wept bitterly*: Nay, he could ſcarce wipe off that ſinne, and recover himſelfe again whilſt he lived.

Wherefore let us take heed of unprepared coming to the Sacrament; for God will not hold ſuch guiltleſſe: Yea, if his own ſonnes or daughters tranſgreſſe thereby, hee will make them to feele the ſmart of it. But now to come

to all such as come month by month, hand over head, without any examination and repentance, in their uncleanesse and abomination, making no *conscience* of their reformation, let me tell them that it shall be one of Christs demands of them in the day of judgement. How oft hast thou been at my Table? How oft hast thou been partakers of that holy Communion which I gave unto thee? Hast thou come preparedly, or received worthily, or no? Hast thou eate bread at my Table with me, and lift up thy heele against me? Did I command, and thou wouldst not obey? Did I send my Ministers to thee to reform, but thou wouldst not be *reformed*? Did I check and reprove thee for thy pride, blasphemies, drunkennesse, covetousnesse, anger, wrath, malice, fornication, hypocrisie and brophanesse in the matter of my worship? and yet wouldst thou *still* live in these sinnes? Where are all the Sacraments that thou hast received? How hast thou behaved thy selfe? Where are the sinnes that thou hast forsaken, and pleasing corruptions that thou hast abhorred? What grace and holinesse hast thou received by the *means* thou hast enjoyed? and how hast thou manifested the same through thy whole conversation? Oh! woe, woe unto thee, yea and a world of woes unto thee, and unto all such as shall bee silent and speechlesse to those or the like demands of Christ: for they cannot say they have come out of their sins, and have been reformed by the means of grace, and have received spirituall nourishment and refreshing

refreshing from the heavenly banquet of the Communion of the body and bloud of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A man will especially regard the last words of a deare friend, who is as a mans soul, when he is to speak upon his death-bed, and will be carefull to remember them: and dost thou not more regard the last Will and Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ? We count it a horrible sinne to alter the last Will of a man that is dead. Beloved, the Lord Jesus, before he left this world, instituted this blessed Sacrament at his last Will and Testament, and hath given us a charge, that as we would not eate and drink our owne damnation by bringing the guilt of his body and bloud upon our soules, so that we should discerne the Lords body, and not come unpreparedly in our sinnes and abominations, without reverence and respect of such holy and high mysteries, as if there were nothing to be received and looked for after, then the bare & naked element of bread and wine, or as if we did come to communicate with unclean Devils. O my brethren, if you had but faith, you would be able to discerne Christ in the Sacrament; and therefore when thou commest unto it, thou must prepare and sanctifie thy selfe for to communicate with him in those holy Ordinances and heavenly mysteries of his most pretious body and bloud: For if so be that thou retainest thy sins, and so come unworthily unto this holy Table of the Lord, thou art a great covenant-breaker with God: For thou never com-

comest unto the Communion, but thou makest and renewest thy covenant with God; wherein thou promisest thus much or the like in effect. Lord, I have been formerly a drunkard, but now I promise to give it over, and never to be a drunkard more; I have been a scoffer at Religion, and a mocker and derider of thy children; but now I faithfully promise (Lord) that I will never do so any more. I have been wicked and sinfull, disobeying and rebelling against all thy holy commandements, and respected not thy judgements and thy promises, and have beene careleſſe of thy glory: But now (Lord) as I eate this bread, and drink this wine, ſo I covenant unto thee, and promiſe to thee, that I will amend all my ſinfull wayes, and become a reformed Chriſtian. And as I ever look that the body and bloud of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt repreſented in the element, ſhould nourish my ſoule unto eternall life: ſo I promiſe to be diſobedient to the Devil, but faithfull and obedient unto thee. I will ſtop my ears againſt the allaring inchantments of the world, and wicked ſuggeſtions of the Devill; but I will open them wide to hearken to thy voyce, that I may obey thy commands. But now as thou haſt made it, ſo if thou haſt broken this thy covenant with God, returning to thy former courſes of ſin and diſobedience againſt him, know thou, that this covenant of thine which thou haſt broken, ſhall ſtand in full force againſt thee: for God will aſſuredly *require* it at thy hands: and all the Sacraments which thou haſt received, thou

thou haſt received them but as ſo many ſeales and pledges of thy juſt deſerved condemnation.

But ſome man may object and ſay, *Do all that come unworthily unto the Sacrament, eate and drink their own damnation? Then many hundreds, yea thouſands are damned: Are all damned that have eat and drunk unworthily?* *Object.*

Anſ. No; but a man may eate and drink his own damnation *three* wayes: Firſt, *in regard of guilt and liableneſſe unto Gods wrath*: and ſo he that eateth and drinketh his naturall food, his dinner, ſupper, or breakfaſt in his ſinnes, eateth and drinketh his own damnation: yea, whoſoever thou art, that commeſt unto this holy banquet in thy ſinnes, in thy pride, choler, malice, wrath or revenge, covetouſneſſe, hypocriſie, and deadneſſe in Gods ſervice, thou never eateſt a bit of bread, but thou eateſt and drinkeſt thine own damnation; that is, thou eateſt and drinkeſt that which will *witneſſe* againſt thee another day, *Deut.* 28. 16, 17, 18, 19 verſes, &c. *If thou wilt not hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, to obſerve and doe all his commandements, then all theſe curſes ſhall come upon thee & overtake thee: Curſed ſhalt thou be in the City, and curſed in the field, curſed ſhal be thy basket and thy ſtore.* Now if thy bread be curſed, then thou alſo art curſed that eateſt it. *Anſw.*

Secondly, *in regard of the ſeale and obligation in the conſcience*; ſo he that eateth and drinketh the Sacrament in his ſins, eateth and drinketh his own damnation; that is, he eates and drinks that

that which seals up his damnation against the great day of account. And thus many amongst us, and I feare the most part of this Congregation, have eate and drunk their own damnation. But this seale may be broken off, and God grant it may.

Thirdly, in regard of sigillation in heaven; and so he that eats and drinks unworthily, and will not be reformed; he that receives the Sacrament time after time, but still retains his sins, and will not be humbled for them, nor forsake them, he setteth a seale in heaven upon his own damnation, that all the whole world can never break off, but such a one most certainly is a damned creature.

And now (my brethren) God forbid there should be any such here, but that this seale may bee broken off: And O that God would put some strength into this word, that it may be broken off by your godly sorrow for your sin, and forsaking of them all: for if this seale be set on your damnation, why do I yet speak unto you, and intreat and beseech you in the name of Christ to come home and be reconciled to him? and I desire to stand here, as *Jehoiadah* set Porters at the gates of the City, and of the house of the Lord, to keep off all those that come in their uncleanness, 2 *Chron.* 23. 19. So I stand this day as the Porter of the Lord, to keep the Lords watch, that no prophane wretch, no proud hearted sinner, that means not to enter into a new course of life, that no such one come unto this

holy

holy communion. I charge that as you will answer the guilt of Christs bloud before Gods Throne, that thou meddle not with it. But now if there should be any that would absent himselfe because he will the more freely go on in his sins, let him know that such a one excludes himselfe from the benefits and merits of Christs death, and shall never have the benefit of a Redeemer at the day of judgement; but shall perish in his sins for his careleſſe neglect and fearfull contempt of so effectuall and powerfull means of salvation and purging, as is the bloud of Christ truly and really offered in the Sacrament. Wherefore if thou comest or comest not, woe is thee, if so be thou livest and continuest in thy sins, and goest on in thy unholy courses.

And now to conclude; as the Cherubim stood before Paradise with a naked sword to keep *Adam* out, that he might not enter and so eate of the tree of life: So I bring with me the sword of God, to run it up to the hilts in the heart and bowels of every ungodly man, every rebellious and impenitent sinner this day, that dares presume to rush upon this holy Ordinance of God, with a polluted and uncleane heart. Therefore let me exhort thee, that as thou tendrest the eternall good of thy soul, so thou be carefull not to eate the body of Christ, nor drink his bloud in thy sins, lest thou eate thine owne bane, and drink thine owne curse: Nay, so doing, thy misery will bee so great, as a good man well weighing and considering of it, said, I professe I had rather have

have all my veins cut open, and my bloud spilt on the ground, then deliver the body and bloud of Christ unto a prophane sinner: for why should I deliver his own bane and destruction unto him? But now (my brethren and beloved) come out of your sins, come and welcome, if you part with your lusts, and so you shall be sure to have his bloud to wash your heart, and cleanse you, his righteousnesse to cleare you, and cloath you, his graces to strengthen you, his spirit to heal and to sanctifie your hearts and natures; and the Lord Jesus Christ to supply all good that is wanting in you. But if yet notwithstanding all this that hath been said, you will go on in your sins, and live as you did in your swearing, whoring, lying, and drinking, and all manner of filthinesse; and as you came unto it unclean, so you depart away from it more unclean, and never make any conscience of any reformation, I pronounce this day before God and his elect Angels, that thou shalt surely perish, and thy soule and body be damned and tormented in the scorching flames of hell for evermore. Therefore hearken unto instruction, and give eare unto councell, now whiles that the Lord offers it to you, that so you may not harden your hearts any more, but may heare and obey, that your souls may live, and so coming together to this holy and blessed Communion for the better and not for the worse, you may return home with the blessing of children.

FINIS.

THE DVTIE OF COMMUNICANTS: OR, Examination required of every COMMUNICANT.

In a SERMON Preached,

By that vigilant and painfull Minister of the Word,

WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.
Sometime Fellow of *Pembroke Hall* in *Cambridge*, and late Parson of *Rochford* in *Essex*.

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EXAMINATION
Required in every COMMUNICANT.

A Sermon preached by Mr. WILLIAM FENNER Minister of Gods Word.

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2 COR. 11.28.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup.

IN the latter part of this Chapter the Apostle treats of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper: And first hee reproves the Corinthians for their unworthy comming to it, as wee see in verse 18. There were Errors, and Schismes, contempt of the poore, drunkennesse, excesse, disorder, ond unprofitablenesse in the duties of God: they waxed worse and worse

by the Sacrament. All theſe, and ſundry other abuſes were among them; ſo that they did not eate the Lords Supper aright as they ought.

Secondly, *he reduceth them back to the firſt prime inſtitution of it by Jeſus Chriſt*, as we ſee in verſe 23. that hereby they might both ſee how grievouſly they had abuſed thy Sacrament, and likewiſe ſee how they might ſanctifiedly uſe it.

Thirdly, *he ſhewes the danger of unworthy receivers*: and this he ſets out two wayes:

Firſt, by *the greivouſneſſe of the ſinne*; ſuch a perſon makes himſelf guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, as we ſee verſe 27.

Secondly, *by the dolefull conſequence that follows* upon it; *He eats and drinks damnation to himſelfe*, as we ſee verſe 29.

The ſum of the text

Now in *this* verſe (that I may not trouble you with ſpeaking of any more matter then what is neceſſary for the preſent Theam) *he ſhewes how we may prevent, eſcape, and avoid this danger*; how we may take an order that we doe not fall into this greivous ſinne, that we doe not plunge our ſelves into this grievous miſery: *Let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* A man muſt *examine* himſelfe, ſift his owne ſoule, and labour to prepare himſelfe, before he dare to venture on this ſacred buſineſſe. In theſe words, before we ſet upon the particular handling of them, we may obſerve, that

Obſerv. 1. We muſt not ruſh upon the ſacrament.

We muſt not ruſh upon the Sacrament.

There muſt ſomewhat be done *before* we can receive

receive it, *Let a man examine himselfe, and so let him eate of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* There are none of the Ordinances of God, that a man may safely rush upon. Wouldst thou offer any sacrifice to God? but thou must stay first, and *examine* thy self, whether there be not somthing yet undone: It may be thou hast offended God in something or other; It may bee thou art out with thy brother; thou must first goe and be reconciled to thy brother, and then offer thy gift, *Matth.* 5. So, wouldst thou reprove thy neighbour? It may be there is somewhat out of order, some indisposednesse in thee, thou art not yet in case to set on this duty; it may bee thou art faulty, and guilty thy self; it may be thou hast a beam in thine own eye. *First* (saith the Text) *pull the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou maist see clearly to pull the moat out of thy brothers eye*, Matth. 7. 5. So wouldst thou reforme thy outward man? But it may bee thy inward man is not reformed; there is some lust in thy heart, some pride in thy will, some stubbornesse in thy spirit, some Idoll in thy bosome; *First, cleanse the inside of the platter, Matth.* 23. 26. There is never an ordinance of God that can bee done, but there must be somewhat done first, a man must doe somthing before, As in the choice of Officers, as Ministers, or Deacons, other Officers in the Church, first, they must bee *proved* before they be chosen: so in all the Ordinances of God. Would wee come to the *Sacrament?* There is somewhat must bee done first, we must

Matth. 5.

Matt. 7.5.

Mat. 13.26

examine our ſelves, and root out all unſanctifiedneſſe, and indiſpoſition, that cannot ſtand with the right communicating in the Lords Supper. And ſo in every other good duty.

Reaſon 1. The *reaſons* of this are:

Naturally we are not invited guests.

First, *becauſe naturally we are not invited gueſts*, wee are not ſuch as are invited to the Lords Supper; we are children of wrath, and as long as we are in ſuch a eſtate, we cannot come aright to the Communion. This is *childrens* bread, and it cannot be given to *dogges*. Chriſt, whenſoever he ſets his dainties before his people, he tels us for whom they are, *Take, eate, this is my Body that is broken for you.* This is the Supper that is made for you, as it is in this Chapter, verſe 24. First we muſt prove our ſelves invited gueſts.

It is true, the Lord Chriſt invites every man to the Lords Supper; but he *invites him methodically*, he muſt bee in ſuch an eſtate: but every man is not ſo fitted: a man muſt be a member of Chriſt that means to partake of Chriſts death; he muſt be one that is in Chriſt, he muſt be able to *prove* that he is *ingraffed* into Chriſt, he muſt bee able to ſhew the mark of the Lord Chriſt on him. As it is with ſome of your great dinners, and feaſts in this Citie, you have tickets, and all that are admitted to the feaſt, muſt ſhew their ticket before they are admitted; So thou muſt be able to ſhew thy *ticket*, that thou haſt an invitation from Chriſt, thou muſt have a *mark*, and to-

Simile.

ken

ken from Chtiſt that thou commeſt, and commeſt with his warrant.

A ſecond reaſon is, *though thou be invited, it may be thou art not diſpoſed.* If a man will doe a thing that hee is naturally indiſpoſed to, there muſt be ſomewhat done before of neceſſitie: So the Lords Supper, it is a thing that naturally wee are indiſpoſed unto, therefore ſomewhat muſt of neceſſity be done firſt. Naturally we are unholy, we are unthankfull, and carnall, we are in our ſinnes, ſtrangers from God, and the Covenant of God, and from the ſeale of the Covenant: all this indiſpoſition muſt be wrought out before we can comfortably come hither. If Chriſt would have the very (*hamber* firſt trimmed, before he inſtituted the Paſſe-over, and the Sacrament; much more will hee have the *ſoule* diſpoſed for him, and the heart cleanſed from all filthineſſe. If hee that ate of the Peace-offering being indiſpoſed, having his uncleanneſſe upon him, was to bee cut off from his people. *Levit.* 7. 20. what will God doe to ſuch people as come hither in their uncleanneſſe, and indiſpoſition, unſanctified, and unqualified?

Reaſon. 2 We are indiſpoſed.

Levit. 7. 20.

Thirdly, *ſuppoſe we were both invited and diſpoſed, yet this is not enough: This is a ſolemn Ordinance of God, and an ordinary diſpoſition will not ſerve the turne.* Though every child of God bee ordinarily diſpoſed to every good word and work, to pray, and to heare the word of God, he is prepared and furniſhed to e-

Reaſon. 3 Solemne preparations required to the Sacrament.

very well doing ordinarily and habitually? but a man must be disposed *further*; There is a solemne preparation required to the Communion, as in *Deut.* 16. 15. there were *solemne feasts* in the Law: so there is this *solemne feast* in the Gospel, and there are *solemne preparations* required thereto. When we come to the Communion, to eate the Lords Supper, it is not eating and drinking in Christs presence; for so may any reprobate doe, and yet Christ may say to him, Depart from me, thou worker of iniquity. It is not to come and sit in your Pewes, and wait till the Bread come, and take it; and till the Cup come, and drink it; so many a reprobate may doe, and the Corinthians did, that did eate and drink their own damnation: But there must be a solemne preparation to it, to be *sealed with the Spirit of Promise*, to be righteous by faith in the body and blood of Christ; For a man to be humble and empty of his sinne, to bee thirsty after the pretious blood of Christ, to be fed and built up in the promises; It is a weighty thing to come to the Communion: a man must bee a *worthy man*, or else he hath nothing to doe here, As *Solomon* said of *Adonijah*, *If he be a worthy man, not a haire shall fall from his head; but if wickednes be found in him, he shall die*, 1. King 1.52. So if we be *worthy* men and women, not a haire of our head shall fall to the ground, none of the curses shall light on us; that light on unprepared persons: but if wickednesse be found in us, if we be guilty of any sinne, if we live in any lust

Deut. 16. 16.

1 King. 52.

not

not mortfied; if there be any prophaneneſſe in our lives, in our families, in our courſes and callings, though we catch hold of the hornes of the Altar, though we partake of theſe holy myſteries, yet we ſhall be ſo far from having any mercie, as that we ſhall haſten our own ruine, we ſet a ſeal on our own judgment, and make our caſe worſe then it was before.

Let us take notice of it and never dare to ruſh on any of Gods ordinances. You know what became of the fooliſh man in the Goſpel, that when they were invited to come to the marriage Supper, he thought it was nothing but to come with them that came, to crowd in with them, and ſit down among the reſt; he conſidered not what he went about, that he might be prepared accordingly; the event was this, he was caſt out into utter darkneſſe, *Matth.* 22. 13. It is dangerous *ruſhing* on any of Gods ordinances. To ruſh upon prayer, for a man to fall down upon his knees, and to utter any thing before the Lord haſtily with his mouth, not conſidering that God is in heaven, and he on the earth. A mans word may damne his own ſoule, and pull vengeance on his own pate, his prayers may prove a curſe, his prayer for mercy may bee turned into vengeance: So the higher the ſervice, the greater the danger. As the ſervants of *Abigail* ſaid to her, *Conſider what you doe*, when evill was determined againſt them: ſo conſider what you doe when you come to the Sacrament, you come to a weighty thing, to that that will either ſet you

Uſe. To take heed of raſh performance of duties.

2 Sam. 15. 17.

neerer to the Kingdom of God, or to hell and condemnation. But I let this passe, and come to the words themselves.

Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.

Parts of the Text.

In these words observe,

First, the *matter of the duty commanded*, that is, *to eat of that bread, and to drink of that cup.*

Secondly, *the manner of doing the duty*; not only to eat of that bread, but *so* to eat; and not only to drink that cup, but *so* to drink.

Thirdly, *the rule of direction how to come in a right manner to partake of it*, that is, by *examining* of our selves, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eate of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

Fourthly and lastly, *the benefit following that direction*, and that is in this word *But*; *But let a man examine himselfe.* He had said before, *He that eats and drinks unworthily, is made guilty of the body and bloud of the Lord*; and, *he discerneth not the Lords body*, vers. 27. *But*, saith he, as if he should say, if a man would prevent this; if a man would take order that he be not *guilty* of the body and bloud of Christ, that he do not come *undiscerningly* to these heavenly mysteries, but with comfort, and title to the promises, with hope and confidence and speeding there of the benefits of Christ exhibited, then *let a man examine himselfe, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

Now

Necessity of receiving the Lords Supper.

Now I will passe over some of these points, namely, that we are to eate that bread, and drink that cup. *There is a necessity that we should receive the Lords Supper.* I need not stand on this, you know it is sufficiently proved by the Sacrament of the Law, which was the fore-runner of this Sacrament, that soul that did not partake of that, was to die the death, he was to be *cut off* from Gods people, *Num.*9.13. If the Lord was so careful of those Sacraments that were inferior to these (and yet they were of the same *substance* as these) that the man that neglected to come to them, to partake of them, was to be *cut off*, to be *excommunicated* from the people of God, and to be rent off from the Congregation of the Saints, then how much more for these heavenly, and weighty, and glorious Ordinances of the *Gospel*, which are far more glorious then them of the *Law*? But I will not stand upon that.

Num.9.13.

The Lords Supper to be received often.

I might here take notice too of the *frequencie* of the duty: for so it hath dependance on those words formerly, *As oft as yee eat this bread, and drink this cup, yee shew the Lords death*, and so that is, as oft as ye eate, do it in this manner. This is the command of God, that we *oft* receive the Lords Supper. In the *Primitive* times St. *Basil* observes, that they ate it *three* or *foure times* in a *week*, on Wednesdayes, Fridaies, and on the Lords day,; but that was a time of persecution, I will not stand upon that. I think it not needfull: But it should bee *often*, wee should not trust it only upon Easter and Whitsontide, and

Basill.

and Christ tide, three or four times in the year.

Again, I might obſerve here from this myſtery received, in that he cals it *Bread*, I might obſerve againſt the Papiſts Tranſubſtantiation, that the bread received, is *not tranſubſtantiated*, it is bread. And againſt that of receiving in one kind. *So let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup*: he doth not ſay, ſo let him eat of that bread only, but he directs the command in *both kinds*. But I let this paſſe, and come to the ſeceond thing, that is, the *manner* how we ſhould do this duty.

Obſerv. The manner of performance of duties to be regarded

So let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

It is not, firſt let him examine himſelf, and then let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup: But let him *examine* himſelfe, and then *SO* let him eate: implying, that *examining a mans ſelfe helps, or ought to help a man to a right manner*: and when he hath gotten a right manner, then to eat that bread, and drink that cup; that he may do not only for *matter* that which the Lord commands, but for *manner* as the Lords commands. Beloved, the Lord ſtands on *circumſtances* as well as duties: we are all racers, wee run, but we muſt *ſo run that we may obtain*, 2 *Cor.* 9. 26. *So* pray that we may ſpeed, *ſo* hear that we may be converted, *ſo* reprove that we may be edified; *ſo* behave our ſelves in our places and callings, that we may glorifie God. It is not enough for a man to run, but he muſt *ſo run*, if he mean to obtain. Every man will be ſpeaking and doing good things; but *ſo ſpeak*, and *ſo do*, Jam. 2. 12. The Lord calls upon us to have a care of

2 Cor. 9. 26

Jam. 2. 12.

the

the *manner* of duties, as well as of the *matter* of duties. It is not enough that a man come to eate of that bread, and drink of that cup, but *so* to eat, and *so* to drink of it, he must partake of the Lords Table, and so as the Lord enjoyns.

Now the *Reasons* of this are:

First, *because the same Lord that commands the matter, commands the manner too.* The Lord he will have his service well done, as well as done, he will have the work well performed, as well as performed. It is not only the thing that the Lord stands upon, but the right manner and kind of doing it.

Reas. 1. The Lord commands the manner as well as matter.

When *David* perswaded his sonne *Solomon* to worship the God of his Fathers, he bids him not only do the thing, but do it in a right manner. *And thou my sonne* Solomon, *know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve him.* Is that all? No, but *with a perfect heart, and a willing mind,* 2 *Chron.* 28. 9. He commands him to do it, not only for the matter of it, but in the right manner of it. A man may serve God, but if it be not with a perfect heart, and a willing minde, and with a chearfull spirit; if he be not ready to *every* command, if he do not open his eares to every rebuke, a man doth not serve God at all. The *manner* either makes all, or marres all.

2 Chron. 28. 9.

Secondly, another Reason is, *because circumstances overthrow actions, if they be not rightly and duly observed.* As for example: In Scripture prayer is an action commanded of God:

Reas. 2. Circumstances overthrow actions, as 1. Prayer.

God: the Lord commands us to *pray*, that we call upon his name *duly, every day, in all our needs and neceſſities*, upon all occaſions *continually*. But now if we pray not *aright*, not in that *manner* that the Lord hath preſcribed; if we pray either with a guilty defiled conſcience, with cold affections, with a dead ſpirit, or without departing from iniquity, or without a pure heart: if a man pray without the right manner of prayer, he marres all his prayer, it is a *howling*, and not a prayer. *They did not cry to mee* (ſaith God) *when they howled on their beds*, that is, when they prayed: but becauſe they did not pray in a right manner, the Lord calls it a *howling*, and not a *prayer*. *We roare as Beares*, in *Iſay* 59. 12. the Prophet nicknames it, ſpeaking in the perſon of the people, he calls it the *roaring of Beares*: The Lord had as lief heare the barking of a Dog, or the grunting of a Swine, as a man that doth not pray *aright*, with a bleeding heart, with contrition of ſoule and ſpirit, with a *ſpirit of grace and ſupplication*. When a man prayes, and prayes dot aright, his prayer leaves that name, it is no more a prayer in Gods account.

Iſai. 59. 12.

2 Preaching.

And ſo *preaching*, it is an admirable action; but if a man doe not preach *aright*, if it be *flattering with the enticing words of mans wiſdome*, or *beating the aire*, and to ſhew his owne *learning*, this overthrowes the action of preaching, hee preacheth not *Chriſt* but *himſelfe*, *himſelfe*, not the *Goſpel*, though the Goſpel bee in his Sermon all over, yet himſelfe hee preacheth, the

the action is marred, the circumstance marreth it.

So in the *Lords Supper*, if a man come not prepared, that he have not the *Wedding Garment*, that he be not aright qualified according to the requisites of the Gospel, this is not to eate the Lords Supper. Saith the Apostle, *When yee come together, this is not to eate the Lords Supper:* you think you eate the Lords Supper, you take the bread and the cup, and can say, Blessed be God, and I pray God to blesse me: you may come and doe these actions, but the action is altered, the action is diversified when it is not done in a *right manner.* 3 Receiving the Sacrament.

So if a man come to *reprove his brother*, if himselfe be faulty, do you think this a sufficient reproof? No, it is hypocrisie. *Thou hypocrite, Matth.* 7. 5. his reproof of his brother is hypocrisie. 4. Brotherly reproof. Matt. 7. 5.

So for men to tell one another of their faults, and to tell them with a spirit of bitternesse; this is not Christian dehortation, but *biting one another, Gal.* 5. 15. Gal. 5. 15.

And so *for eating and drinking*, beloved, eating is lawfull, and drinking is lawfull, and *marrying and giving in marriage*, all these are lawfull, yet if a man eate not *aright*, and drink not *aright*, and *marry in the Lord*, and eate and drink *with title to the Lords creatures*, that he have interest in the covenant of God, if Christ be not in it, how shall he have comfort? Nay, that very nature of his eating is altered, his eating and drink- 5. Eating and drinking.

drinking, and marrying is a ſinne. As our Lord Chriſt ſhews of the old world, *They did eat and drinke, and were marrying and giving in marriage, till* Noah *entred into the Arke, and the flood came and ſwept them away*, Matth. 24. 37. He reckons their *eating* and *drinking* among their *ſins*, among the reaſons and cauſes why the flood came upon them, they did eate and drink, and marry and give in marriage.

Mat. 24. 37

Object. You will ſay, *Was that the reaſon the flood came? And was that an argument of their ſecurity? Did not* Noah *eate and drink and marry? And were not his ſons married that were in the Arke, and he a grand-father.*

Anſw. But he did it *aright*; therefore his eating and drinking is not brought in as a ſigne of ſecurity, but of the old world, that were *carnall* and wretched people; it was; becauſe they did not eate and drink *aright*.

There be Rules in eating and drinking, in talking and diſcourſing, in doing the duties of our callings: There be Rules how you ought to buy and ſell, and to do every good word and worke. If theſe Rules be not obſerved, the Rules of Gods bleſſed word, the *actions* themſelves are altered; though the *things* be *commanded* of God, yet they are curſed and *abominable* things, when the true form and faſhion of them is not regarded, though they be never ſo godly.

Simile. A garment, though it be never ſo good, if the Taylor handle it not well, it is marred in the making, if hee bring it not to a right forme, and

and make it in a right manner, the man that is to have the garment, is disappointed. So Timber, though it be never so excellent; though it be all Oke, or Elm, or whatsoever tree, though it be never so fit for building, if the Artificer deale not well in handling it, the inhabitant that comes there, may curse the day that ever he came there: If it be not well built, it may fall on his head and kill him, and all that belongs to him. So it is in all the Ordinances of God, and the matters of Religion, we must not only do them for matter, but for *manner* too: for that either makes or marres them.

Reas. 3. The right manner of doing duties gets the blessing

Thirdly, another Reason is, *because only the right manner of doing duties gets the blessing.* A man may pray a thousand times, and never be *heard*, he may hear a million of Sermons, and never be *converted*, a man may come to all the Sacraments in the yeare, all his life long, and never be *sealed against the day of redemption.* A man may do the *things*, and never get the blessing; all the blessing lies in the *right manner* of doing. *Blessed is that servant, who when his master comes, shall find so doing,* Matth. 24. 48. He saith not, *Who when his master commeth, shall find doing.* Christ when he comes to judgement, shall finde many *doing*; it may be he will come in prayer time, it may be he will come in the morning, when many thousands shall be at their prayers in their families: it may be he will come at night, when all are at prayer in their houses; it may be he will come on the Sabbath, when all the Countrey

Matt. 24. 48.

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is at Church, hearing of Sermons, hee ſhall finde many thouſands *doing*, and *praying* But bleſſed is that ſervant, whom his Lord when hee comes, ſhall find *ſo* praying, *ſo* hearing, *ſo* receiving the Sacrament: He ſhall find many believing, but *ſo* believing gets the bleſſing: many profeſſing but it is *ſo* profeſſing that gets the comfort. I ſay, all the bleſſings of God are promiſed to the right *manner of doing*. Now, what is it, when we doe duties, what doe we look for? Is it not for a *bleſſing*? Why doe we doe the duties, if we doe not doe them *ſo* as we may get the bleſſing? Now except we obſerve the right manner of doing them, all is to no purpoſe.

Reaſon. 4. Chriſts example.

Fourthly, another Reaſon is, *the example of Jeſus Chriſt*; Chriſt hath given us an example that we ſhould doe as he did: Now hee did not onely doe that which his Father bid him doe, for *matter* but for *manner*, both in all the words hee ſpake, and in all the deeds that hee performed. For the words he ſpake, *As the Father hath ſaid unto me, even ſo ſpeak I*, Joh. 12. And in Joh. 14. 31. *As the Father hath given me commandement even ſo doe I*. Mark, he did not onely obey his Father in the *matter* of his command, but in the *manner* of it. And as Chriſt hath done thus, ſo all that are Chriſts: all the ſervants of God in all ages, they have been very carefull, eſpecially of the *right manner* of obeying God. As it is ſaid of *Noah*, *Gen.* 6 22, *As the Lord commanded Noah, even ſo did he*, juſt as the Lord commanded him; he did not onely make an Arke, but *ſo* hee made

Joh. 12. Joh. 14. 31.

made all the roomes: *ſo* hee made it in the ſame forme and figure, and in the ſame ſimilitude, juſt as the Lord ſet him downe the patterne, *even ſo did he.* So the Lord ſets down the patterne of every good word and work, of all our prayers, and Sermons, and hearing, and conference, and keeping the Sabbath, and ſpeaking holily: all our *actions* have their *patterne* ſet downe in the word of God. Now as wee are to doe the things, ſo wee are to doe them in the ſame manner, as the Lord commands, even *ſo* muſt we doe.

Fiftly and laſtly, *except we doe it in a right manner, except as wee come to the duty, ſo wee come to the right manner, wee can never glorifie God*; The glory of God lies in the manner of doing of things. *So let your light ſhine before men, that they may ſee your good workes, and glorifie your Father which is in heaven, Matth.* 5. 16. Mark, the light muſt not ſhine onely in our lives and converſations; but *ſo* that the duty muſt be a means to the glorifying of God. Now the *means* muſt have its proportion, and likeneſſe, and nature, and mold, and frame, from the nature of the *end.* Look how the *end* is that the dutie lookes unto, *ſo* muſt the *frame* and *faſhion* of the duty be: Now if the *end* of all our actions be, that *God* may be *glorified*, that muſt put a forme and faſhion upon every duty, that it may be *ſo*, that he may have glory. Suppoſe a man *pray* every day in his family, and call all his houſhold, his ſervants, and wife and children, and all under

Reaſon. 5 From Gods glorie.

der his roof about him every morning and evening: he may dishonour God by prayer every day on this fashion: if a man pray coldly, and carelesly, for forme and fashion, without faith, and life: he makes all the ordinance of God vile, and all the worke of God contemptible: his household sleeps, one snorts it may be; another is infinitely prophane, it may bee; and though there be divers that would fain be quickned, and wakened, yet his prayer is so cold: there is no life, nor heat, nor warmth in it, that God is exceedingly dishonoured, and all are thereby rather worse then better. So for a mans preaching, though it be never so good a duty, yet hee must labour to preach *so*, as the Apostle speakes of his preaching and labour in the work of the Ministery, how he may *edifie* others, and *save* his own soule. *So fight I, not as one that beats the aire*; but *so as I may get the mastery*: We must *so* preach, that we may attain the conversion of the people; or else we may rather doe as *Hophni* and *Phineas*, the sonnes of *Eli*, that made the Table of the Lord contemptible, and the Sacrifice of the Lord loathsome in the eyes of the people: So may we do with the ordinance of God.

Take *any* duty of religion, if it be not done *aright*, God hath no glory by it. Suppose thou wouldest reprove thy brother, and tell him of his fault, and check him for his backwardnesse, or omission of some duty, and for the commission of some sinne; if thou doe not doe it with a spirit of compassion, and bowels of Jesus Christ, with

with an humble heart, with a feeling and a pure conſcience; I ſay, thou getteſt a blot to thy own ſelfe, and cauſeſt God to be ill ſpoken of, and the very way of his name to be diſhonored: This will be the effect of it; and ſo in every other dutie. And ſo I come to the uſe.

Is it ſo, that we muſt not onely come to the Sacrament; but come aright; or doe any dutie, but we muſt do it in a *right* manner? *This ſerves to condemne that naturall popery that is in mens hearts, that is, of opus operatum, of the deed done*; this is the religion of the Church of *Rome*, that ſo a man doe the duty (indeed it is better if it bee done in a right manner, but) if it be done, there is ſomewhat a man may look for by that. If a man come to the Sacrament, the very eating of the Hoſt, the very partaking of the body of Chriſt, they make it *meritorious*: ſo the very hearing of *ſo many* Sermons, the very ſaying of *ſo many* prayers, the very performanec of *ſo many* duties, the very *thing it ſelf*, nakedly conſidered, it is of ſome validity. This is rooted in the hearts of men, we ſee it up and downe, people doe the duty, and think all is well enough, when they conſider not how it is done. People pray, but not with *zeale*; they heare, but not with reverence: People come to the Sacrament, not *for the better, but for the worſe*, they come not in a *right manner*; and yet every one hopes to ſpeed, and builds himſelfe on this, that God accepts of him. But this is the folly of mens hearts; it is an evident argument

Uſe. 1. To reprove thoſe that barely doe duties, without looking to the manner.

that men goe fooliſhly to work in the wayes of God. It is the brand of a foole not to be able to *obſerve circumſtances*. *Ariſtotle* the heathen, hee ſaith, *it is the part of a wiſe man to think of, and underſtand the manner of actions*; as a wiſe man ſaith, he obſerves circumſtances. It is a part of wiſdome to obſerve the right circumſtances of every action, as it is *Epheſ.*5.15. *Walke circumſpectly*, that is, *accurately*, as it is in the originall, *not as fooles, but as wiſe*. Marke, hee perſwades them to a right manner of walking; not only to walk in a good courſe, in praying, and hearing, in obedience and ſobrietie, in temperance, faith, and diligence in our callings; but doe it *accurately*, in a right manner; doe it as wiſe men, and not as fooles, they doe it in a wrong manner. It is the part of a foole, I ſay, to doe a thing, and to leave the right manner of doing it. Now this is nothing with God, the Lord doth not eſteeme any action, though it bee never ſo frequently done, except it bee done with his owne ſtamp, except it have his owne character upon it.

I remember a ſtory in 2 *Kings* 17.26. The Aſſyrians there obſerved, that God ſent Lions among them, becauſe they did not obſerve the right manner of the God of Iſrael: they worſhipped the God of Iſrael; but becauſe they obſerved not the right *Manner* of his word, hee ſent Lyons among them, to teare and devoure them in pieces. So though wee pray, and heare, and read, and profeſſe, and have a *name* that wee live; and though we be taken for good people, & heap

heap up duties from day to day, and vie performances; and though we doe them as many times as the children of God; nay, though we could do them ten thousands times oftner then they, yet if we doe them not in *a right manner*, if wee know not the manner of the God of heaven, and earth, with humble hearts, and selfe-denying spirits, with holinesse of affection, and with puritie of heart: if a man doe them not in a right manner, the Lord will teare him in peices, and hee shall have no deliverance for all that.

Use. 2. The reason why men regard the matter and not the manner of duties.

Another use shall be, *what may be the reasons why people are so willing generally, to doe duties for the matter, and care not to doe them in a right manner.* It will not be amisse a little to shew the mystery of this thing: for we see every man is willing to doe duties, every man will be praying, and comming to Church, many reprobates, and God knows how many carnall hearts are in this congregation, some drunkards it may be, some adulterers, some it may be, that committed whoredome the last night, some that have been swearing even now, and deceiving in their shops, there are many carnall hearts; yet every man is willing to do duties, to hear, and to pray. Now what may be the reason that people are willing to doe good duties, and yet are loath to come off with their carnall harts? There are four reasons.

Reason 1. The matter of duties easie.

The first is this, *Because the matter of the dutie is easie, but the manner is difficult.* It is an easie matter to pray, to say, *Lord, I have sinned*

ved against heaven, and against thee. Lord, I have ſworne, I have been a drunkard. I have diſallowed the Sabbath, I have done this and that, I pray thee pardon and forgive me, and give mee thy grace; it is an eaſie matrer to doe this. It is *eaſie for a man to come to Church*, and marke what the Minister ſaith, and follow him from point to point, and it may be goe over it to his family. This is good, there are few that come thus far. And ſo *it is eaſie to come to the Sacrament*, to take the Bread and the Cup, and to pray for a bleſſing, this is eaſie; but, when a man comes to a duty in a *right manner*, here is *difficulty*, when a man doth it with a *How; Take heed How you heare.* He doth not call upon people to hear, that is not the matter; there needs no great diligence for that: but if you will conſider *How* you hear, take heed to that. Here muſt be a great deal of circumſpection, the ſoul muſt be marvellous painfull, a man muſt offer violence to his own ſoul; a man muſt fight againſt his own will, a man muſt beat down his own ſpirit, he muſt crucify his own thoughts, muſt mortify his own mind & beat down his own ſoul. It is a hard thing to do it in a *right manner*, as the Lord commands, if we conſider now how to doe it. This is certaine, fleſh and blood cannot abide to take paines; if it can ſerve God with eaſe, and pray with eaſe, that it will doe; but for a man to *weep* before God, for a man to *indict his heart* to the throne of grace, to *rend his bowels* before his Maker, to *teare the caule of his heart* upon his knees; for a man

man to *vow to God, and pay them*; for a man to *rid his hands of all the wages of iniquity*, for a man to *purifie himselfe as Christ is pure*, for a man to *wrastle with God*, and to take grace *according to the covenant of grace*, with life and power, to doe it in a right manner: *here* is religion, and *this* men cannot abide.

And so for the *Sacrament*, for a man to come in a *right manner*, Oh it is *difficult* to flesh and blood; for a man to goe and *examine all his life*, to *reckon up all his conversation*, to *anotomize himself from his cradle to this moment*; to consider how he hath *sinned* in his *calling*, in his *family*, in his *shop*, in his *company*, in his *speech*, and in his *life*; to goe and judge himselfe of these, and condemne himselfe, and to *accept of his owne punishment*, to goe and *wrack* his owne thoughts, and *crucifie* his owne soule: Oh! *this* is hard, men cannot abide this: therefore they go and take the *matter*, they observe that, and leave out *the manner*.

Secondly, another reason is this, *because the matter of duties may be done with a proud heart*; here is no duty but a man may do it with a proud heart, and never bee humble. A man may *pray*, and use good words, and make good petitions, and have marvellous good language, and Scripture phrases, and termes, and passages, and an admirable sweet tone, and yet have a *proud* heart. A man may come and *preach* a Sermon, he may preach so as that he may strangely affect the hearts of the people, and may make all

Reas. 2. The matter of duties may bee done with a proud heart.

the people wonder and *admire at the gracious words that come from his mouth*, and yet have a *proud* heart.

A man may *heare*, and heare oft, and hear the best Preachers in the Citie, and delight in hearing, and yet have a proud heart. A man may *come to the Sacrament*, and fit to ones thinking, as devoutly as any in the Church, and pray when the people pray, and give thanks when others give thanks, and have a kind of *morall* faith in the Covenant, and a morrall application of the promises, and yet have a *proud* heart. It is the *manner* of doing duties that humbles the soule, as St. *Paul* saith, *Acts* 20. *You know in what manner I have beene with you.* Why, what was the manner? *In all humility of mind*, saith he, being among the Ephesians, preaching to them in a right manner, leaving them the example of his owne patterne, doing all this in a right manner, he did it in *all humility* of heart. It is the right *manner* of prayer that *pulls downe the heart* before God. It is the right manner of hearing the word, that makes a man melt at it. It is the right manner of comming to the Sacrament, that makes a man *feele the comfort of God*, and the promises of the Gospel, and to seek and find the admirable things contained in it. It is the right manner that makes a man *walke lowly* with his God.

Acts 20

Reason. 3 The matter of duties may be done, & yet a man be unholy.

Thirdly, another Reeson is; *Because the matter may stand with an unholy life.* A man may do a duty for the matter of it, and yet be unholy.

holy. This is plain; how many thouſands are there that pray, and yet are vain, and covetous, and carnall? How many thouſands heare Sermons, and yet are unprofitable? *Ever hearing, and never come to the knowledge of the truth.* If they were injurious *before*, they are injurions *ſtill*; if they were couſners before, they are ſo ſtill, if they were drunkards before, they are ſo ſtill. A man may receive the Sacrament every month, and yet may have his luſts, and roll them as a ſweet morſell under his tongue; he may delight in his ſecret luſts, and go on in the deadneſſe of his heart. It is the right manner of worſhipping of God, that purgeth the conſcience, and purifieth the ſoule, and makes a man that there is no room for his corruptions, as you may ſee, 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 10. *You your ſelves know* (ſaith the Apſtle) *how holily and unblamably we walked among you.* He ſpeaks there of his manner of walking, and hee ſaith to them, becauſe it was in a right manner, it was an *holy* manner; ſuch walking as excluded all unholineſſe and prophaneſſe. Fleſh and bloud cannot abide this. Men they love to pray and be proud; they love to hear ſermons, and to have their profit; they love to profeſſe religion, and ſtill to carry their ſecret luſts in their boſomes. People love this alife, to *go up to Gilgall and tranſgreſſe, to offer ſacrifice every new Moon, and every morning, and to find the labour of their hands*, this is right; but for a man to *part* with his iniquity, that is the thing that goes againſt the haire.

The

Reaſ. 4. The matter of duties brings not the croſſe.

The laſt reaſon is, *becauſe the matter of duties bring not the croſſe upon a man.* A man may do all the duties of Religion, and never be perſecuted for it: a man may be as devout as the devouteſt man under heaven, and yet no body hate him for it, except he be devout in a right manner, and worſhip God in a right manner. One man may reprove another that is wicked. A drunkard may ſuffer a drunkards reproof, and be never the worſe: A whoremaſter may ſerve his quean ſo, he may call her ſo, and yet not be ſpighted, becauſe it is not right. It is the right doing of it that brings the croſſe; as in 2 *Tim.* 2. 10. *Thou knoweſt my manner of life.* It was that that brought afflictions and perſecutions.

2 Tim. 2. 10

We may ſee to this very day many thouſands that ſeem devout men in the Church, they will pray, and will hardly miſſe any time of prayer morning or evening; and yet they are farre from being perſecuted: nay, many of them are maine perſecuters of the Goſpel of God, enemies to the croſſe of Chriſt, adverſaries to the Saints of God. We ſee it plain in *Acts* 13. 5. we read there of *devout women* that *raiſed perſecution* againſt *Paul.* Marke, they were *devout*, and becauſe it was *not in a right manner*, they perſecuted the Apoſtles, and ſet themſelves againſt them that were truly faithfull. Though wicked men do not love to pray aright, yet many of them are much for praying, they care not how much praying they have, and when they are at prayers, they will pray over from the beginning of the book

Act. 13. 5.

to

to the end, they love it alife. But if they come to a *prayer* that *moves the heart*, that *rifles the conſcience*, that *dogges a man into his boſome, that laies a man flat on his face before God*, they gnaſh their teeth at ſuch a prayer. So they love *preaching* too; I, it is true, if it be preaching that is flaunting, and gloſing, *with the enticing words of mans wiſdome*: but if a man preach *to the conſcience*, if he preach the *pure naked word of God*: and carry it *home to mens ſoules*, this makes them gnaſh their very teeth, and they could eate the Miniſter of God for his labour. It is the right manner of duty that is accompanied with the croſſe.

Thirdly, if we ought to be carefull to performe duties in a right manner, *Let us be exhorted in the feare of God, to go and quicken all our duties, to bring a ſoule into ſo many bodies*; we have bodies of praying, and bodies of hearing, and bodies of receiving the Sacrament, and of good duties, let us get a *ſoule* into them, labour to do them in a right manner. The *bare duty* is like a carcaſſe. It is a Proverb of the Jewes, *Prayer without preparation, it is as a carcaſſe without the ſoule*, that is, a loathſome thing; ſo is prayer without life, and without a right manner of pouring it forth. Let us labour therefore in the feare of God, to pray, and pray *aright*, to heare, and to heare *aright*; to ſeek God, and to ſeek him with all our hearts, aright, and to do every thing in the right way.

Uſe 3. To labour to do duties aright.

Let

Motives to perform duties in the right manner. 1. Motive. Numb. 11. 14.

Let us *consider*, first, *we doe not partake of any ordinance at all, except we doe it in a right manner.* I remember a fit place for this in *Num.* 11, 14. It is said there, *The stranger shall eat the passover, and partake of it according to the ordinance, and the manner of it.* Where the Text puts in the *Ordinance* of the Passover, and the *Manner* of it. For it is all one, they are *Synonyma's*. So the *Ordinance* in every duty, Gods *ordinance* in praying, in hearing the Word, in the Sacrament, in reproof, in every good dutie, it is all one as the selfe-same thing. So that if we pray, and doe not pray in a *right manner*, we have not *prayed*, we doe not partake of the ordinance. So when we come to the Sacrament, the ordinance of the manner of it is all one; it is one compleat concrete action, we doe not partake of it, except we partake of both.

2. Motive.

Secondly consider, *it is nothing but hypocrisie, when a man prayes, and doth not pray in a right manner*; when a man doth any dutie to God, and not in the right wise, it is nothing but hypocrisie, Mark how our Saviour Christ sets forth the hypocrisie of the Pharisee, *Luke.* 18. 11. *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himselfe,* he marks his manner of prayer; he doth not say, *He stood and prayed This*, these words, but *Thus* he prayed, he did not pray in a right manner: there was his hypocrisie, and that was the reason he went home not justified.

Luk. 18. 11

3. Motive. Mat. 15 6.

Thirdly consider: *it makes the Ordinance of God of no effect. Thus they make the Commande-*

ments

ments of God of none effect, Matth. 15. 6. Hee ſpeakes there of their duties that they did in a wrong manner, and their expounding the Scripture, that they did in a wrong wiſe; and their ſacrifice, their offerings, and tithings, their precepts, and many things that were all done after another faſhion then God had commanded; therefore ſaith Chriſt, *Thus, they make the Commandements of God of none effect.* So we make all the duties of Gods worſhip of *none effect.* Wee know there is never an ordinance of God, but it hath great effect if it be rightly performed. Prayer is of great effect, it is able to rend heaven, it is able to pull down God to the ſoule, it is able to wraſtle out a bleſſing, to quicken the heart, to obtain of God every thing we want: but if a man pray not aright, a man may pray, and go away never a whit the more holy, nor more quickned, nor neerer to heaven, nor comfort. So *preaching and hearing*, they are admirable Ordinances, what powerfull effects have they wrought when they have beene done in a right kind? People have cried out and beene converted at them; and many a man hath been pulled out of the power of Satan to the Kingdome of Jeſus Chriſt. They had royall glorious effects upon many thouſand ſoules. But what is the reaſon that our hearing is ſo in effectuall? Becauſe wee heare not in a right manner, this makes the Ordinance of God of none effect, it makes Prayer of no effect, the word of no effect, the Sacraments and Sabbaths of no effect;

you

you see people partake of these things, and are never the wiser.

Lastly, *it cannot please God, it is onely the right manner of doing duties that pleaseth God,* as in 1 Thess. 4. 1. *As yee have received of us, How yee ought to walke, and to please God,* Mark, there is the manner, *That yee may know HOW to walke,* and by that to please God. It is not enough for a man to walke in good duties; that a man may doe, and not please God: but (saith he) *yee have received the manner HOW to walke and to please God.* It is the *manner How* that pleaseth God. A man may walke to hell upon heavens ground, he may go to hell in the wayes of God, it is possible. Suppose a man should go and take (if it were possible) all the surface of ground between this place and *York*, and lay it between this place and *Dover*, a man might go to *Dover* upon *York* ground. So many a man laies the Ordinances of God in hell way: he walkes in the way to hell, and there he layes his prayers, and there his hearing, and his good duties: hee prayes every day, and hears every day, and doth good duties every day, and yet *walkes to hell*; he goes to hell on *heavens* ground. The reason is, because hee doth the duty, and doth not observe the manner how he doth it.

Simile.

The third thing is, the rule of direction, how wee may come to the right manner of receiving the Sacrament, that is, by preparing of a mans selfe: and the preparation is here set down

downe by *the ſpecification of it*, namely, in examining himſelfe. *Let a man examine himſelfe, and ſo let him eate of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.*

The generall ſcope of theſe words, and the Apoſtles meaning in them, is this, That

Every man muſt prepare himſelf before he come to the Lords Table.

Obſerv. 3. Every man muſt prepare himſelf, before he come to the Lords Table.

I cannot ſtand on this, I will only name it.

As in the ſacrament of the Paſſeover, there was preparation to the Paſſeover. In *Joh.* 19. 14. it is ſaid of the Diſciples of Chriſt, that *they made ready the Paſſeover.* In *Matth.* 26. they made the *Lamb* ready, and the *room* ready, and *themſelves* ready, and the *Table* ready, and every thing ready. So in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, wherein Chriſt is the true Paſcall Lamb, when we come to eate of him, wee muſt make every thing ready, *faith* ready, and *repentance* ready, and *intereſt in the promiſes* ready, *and hunger and thirſt after theſe ſpirituall dainties* ready, every thing muſt be ready: or elſe, like a man that comes into the field to battle, that hath not gotten his ſword, or his weapons ready, that is the way for himſelfe to be killed: ſo it is when we come to the Communion, and have not all things ready, it is the way to be damned.

The *Reaſons* of this are,

Reaſon. It is Gods ordinance

Fitſt, *becauſe the Sacrament is an Ordinance of God:* Now all the Ordinances of God require reparation, they are all ſpirituall, and naturally a man is carnall, and therefore cannot be prepa-

Simile. prepared. As it is with wood, there is never a tree in the *wood*, but it is unprepared for *building*. Is there any tree in the wood of the fashion of a Chimney, or of a Lintell, or a Doore? It must first be prepared, as it is *Prov.* 24. 27. *First prepare thy work without, and then build thine house.* So every ordinance is to build a man up in the feare of God, in the grace of God: and in Religion: Now man is *naturally* unprepared for it; First, a man must fell his wood, and then cut it, and hew it even, and carve it, and plane it fit, and prepare it before he build: So a man must hew downe his owne heart, he must humble his owne soule, and qualifie all within him, and so be sanctified before hee be fit.

As for example: In *prayer*, a man must bee *prepared* to prayer before he pray; he must prepare his heart, and then Gods eares will hearken to it. In *Psal.* 10. 17. The Lord will have the heart prepared before he heare the prayer. So it is with the *word of God*, a man must bee prepared before he heare it: As a man that preacheth must be prepared before he preach, as *Ezra* is said to *prepare his heart*, *Ezra* 7. 10. *Hee prepared his heart to doe the Law, and to teach it.* So a Minister cannot *preach*, except he be prepared beforehand, with a *commission from God*, with preserving knowledge, with a coale from Gods Altar, with a spirit of wisedome and understanding, with a law of kindnesse in his lips, with meditation, and with a Theam fitted in his mouth for the people, hee must be pre-

prepared with a *burning and a ſhining light*; or elſe hee ſhall not *edifie* the congregation: So it is with all other ordinances. For *humbling of a mans ſoule*, a man cannot humble his heart, except he be prepared to it, *Amos* 4.12. *Prepare to meet thy God*, he ſpeaks of humiliation. If a man would humble himſelfe before God, if he be not *prepared*, if his heart be not prepared to let go the world, his worldly profits, and vain pleaſures, and carnall acquaintance, his wonted luſts, and former delights. If hee bee not prepared to let theſe goe, when he comes to keep a *Faſt*, or to afflict his ſoule, and goes along to do the dutie, to lay himſelfe down before Almighty God, ſome luſt or other will ſtick in his teeth, and intercept his heart, hee ſhall never be able to doe it: as *Samuel* ſaid to the people; *If you will turn to the Lord, prepare your hearts to doe it*, 1 Sam. 7. So it muſt bee in all the ordinances of God, and much more in the *Sacrament*.

Secondly, another Reaſon is, *becauſe the Lord Chriſt hath made great preparations to provide the Lords Supper*; therefore wee muſt be prepared to eate it. You know what a great deale of adoe there was before this Supper was made. Chriſt muſt be incarnate, and fulfill all righteouſneſſe, he muſt conclude it upon his ſuffering; he muſt *tread the wine-preſſe alone*, and ſuffer himſelfe to be beaten and rejected of God, and men, and ſuffer death, *the curſed death of the Croſſe*. all theſe things were concluded upon,

Reaſon. 2 Chriſt hath made preparation for us in the L. Supper.

before this holy and blessed Supper was provided. *Come* (saith hee) *I have prepared my dinner*, *Matth.* 22. Mark, Christ is fain to *prepare* his dinner, he makes a great Feast: there was great preparation for it; so there must be great preparation of our soules before we can come to this *holy* banquet. It is true among men, there may be great preparation for a feast, and little or nothing for the eating of it. Sometimes there are two or three dayes preparation for a Feast, and it is eaten presently. The reason is, because man naturally hungers after meat and drink, and he alwayes provides twice or thrice in twenty foure houres, for eating and drinking: But the Lords Supper is a *spirituall* banquet, a man is every day, and houre, and moment, naturally *unfit* for it; and there is much adoe to put an edge upon mens appetites, and a keennesse upon mens desires, that they may bee fitted and prepared for it.

Reason. 3 Christ lookes for good entertainment.

Thirdly, another reason is, *because the Lord Christ, when he administers himselfe in this heavenly mystery, he offers to come into the soule, and he looks for good entertainment*; and therefore of necessity there must bee preparation for it. You see when a mortall man, an earthly *Prince*, or a *Noble man* comes to another mans house, what a deale of preparation there is to provide for him: there is meat made ready, and purging the house, and sweeping the yard, and trimming up the very pales, and every thing, and making clean all the Chambers, and riding out

out whatsoever fills it, and every thing that is out of order is set in tune, And, what will my *Lord* think? and what will his *Majesty* think? he will think he is slighted and contemned: And when he comes in, it may be, his owne children shall serve, and his owne wife wait at the Table; and there is running up and down of errands, and a great deale of adoe to give such a one entertainment. There is preparation to entertain a man, as Saint *Paul* said to *Philemon*, *I will that thou prepare me a lodging*: how much more when *the eternall God* shall come under a mans roof, and dine with him?

Lastly, *Because the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, it is a part of Christs last Will and Testament.* Now it is a terrible thing when we *know* our Lords will, and *prepare* not for the doing of it. Look in *Luke* 12. 48. he that knew it not, did things worthy of stripes; but in verse 47. *That servant that knew his Lords will, and prepared not himselfe, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes*, that man shall be damned with *much* damnation: he shall be damned deeper then any body. Dost thou know that the *Lords Table*, that this blessed Sacrament, it is part of *Christs last Testament?* and wilt thou not prepare thy selfe for it, to get an humble heart, and labour for a holy life, and seek for a thirsty soule, and vow upon new obedience, and enter into Covenant with the Lord Jesus Christ, for a better kind of conversation for the time to come? Wilt thou not go and examine thine

Reason 4. It is part of Christs last Testament.

own ſoul, and go and reforme whatſoever is amiſſe in thy family, in thy place and calling? Wilt thou not do theſe things to prepare for this holy will of Jeſus Chriſt? thou ſhalt be damned deeper then any body elſe, becauſe this is a part of Gods laſt Will and Teſtament, and thou knoweſt it, and therefore woe unto thee if thou prepare not for it.

THE

THE DVTIE OF THE REPROVER, AND The Persons reproved,

SET FORTH In a SERMON Preached,

By that Reverend and faithfull Minister of Gods Word,

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THE DUTY OF REPROVERS And Persons reproved,

A Sermon preached by Mr. WILLIAM FENNER Minister of Gods Word.

PROV. 29. 1.

He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

THese words, by reason of the ambiguity in the *Hebrew* tongue, they bear *two expositions*, and our English can suffer but one.

The first Exposition is this, *He that reproveth another, and hardeneth his owne neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*

remedy. The othet is as we have it here translated, *He that being often reproved, hardeneth his necke, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*

I desire to speak of *both* these expositions, for feare I should misse the true sense of this Text.

For the first, it is a truth of God every where confirmed in the Scriptures, *that hee that reproves another, and yet hardeneth his owne heart, hee doth but make a rod for his owne back, hee puls sudden destruction upon his owne selfe.*

Then *Secondly*, there is no hinderance from the context, but that this may bee the meaning of the text: you know the *Proverbs* have little or no coherence, except two or three chapters. Indeed there is a coherence in them, but *generally* through the Proverbs there is none; so that if the text it selfe will beare one exposition as well as another indifferently, the meaning none can tell, onely as it is hit.

Thirdly and lastly, the *Text* it selfe favours *this* exposition: for so the word in the *Hebrew* is, *A man of reproofes, that hardens his owne neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedie.*

Now the Question is, Whether the wise mans meaning here be of the actuall reproof, the reproving of another; or of *passive* reproof, this is undetermined which of these is meant.

A man can have no light from the coherence,

none

none in the world; and from the text it selfe, there is as much reason why we should expound it one way (even almost) as the other. So that I say, for feare I should let goe the true meaning of the wise man. I desire to speak a little of the *active* sense. *He that often reproveth another, and yet hardeneth his own neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.* From hence I may observe, that.

Observ. 1. A guilty hardned reprover, shall be destroyed.

A reprover (whether a Master or a Minister, or a Magistrate, or a Father, or a private Christian, be he what he will be) *that reproveth another, and yet is guilty himselfe* either in the same kind, or else in another, or in any kind) *and hardeneth his own heart in it, that man shall suddenly be destroyed without remedy.*

Take a *Preacher* that preacheth strict doctrine to the people, that is very zealous against their sinnes, he is up with hell and damnation against their filthy courses: he preacheth for quickning, but *himselfe* is not quickned; hee threatneth judgments against hardnesse of heart, and yet he hath a hard heart *himselfe*; this man puls destruction upon his owne pate. Hee is like the Pharisees, that imposed *upon others grievous burdens and heavie to be born, but would not touch them with one of their fingers themselves*, Matth. 23. 4.

The *Reason* of this is, because

Reason 1. It is against his office.

First *such a reprover of sinne, it is against his office*: the office of a reprover binds him to be *blameleſſe* as the Apostle speakes, *A Bishop must be blameleſſe*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. Every Christian should

ſhould be blameleſſe; how much more *Miniſters*, that beare the office of *reprovers*? they ſhould be *blameleſſe*. Nay, if a man, though hee take not the office of a reprover, yet if he beare the *perſon* of a reprover (as every private Chriſtian muſt when God calls him to it: for *every* man may be called to *reprove*) though he have no authority over another, though hee bee a *private* man, he may beare the *perſon* though not the office of a reprover. Now a man muſt be unculpable, and unblameable himſelfe, or elſe hee ſinnes againſt his *perſon*. If a man reprove another for being carnall, himſelfe muſt be ſpirituall, *Gal.* 6. 1. *If any man be overtaken with a fault, yee that are ſpirituall, reſtore him.* The reprover, the exhorter, and admoniſher, muſt be *ſpirituall*, if hee would draw another to be ſpirituall.

Reaſon. 2 He cannot reproye to a right end.

Secondly, *ſuch a reprover as is guilty himſelfe in that kind, or in any other kind, hee can never reprove to a right end. Why ſeeſt thou a moat in thy brothers eye, and conſidereſt not the beame in thine owne eye? Matth.* 7. *verſ.* 3. Why (ſaith he) to what end? what is that thou lookeſt at, thou art ſevere to eſpye faults in thy brothers eye? To what end doeſt thou reprove him? What is the reaſon? What is the thing thou wouldſt have, that thou finddeſt fault with him? *Why ſeeſt thou a moat in thy brothers eye?* As if hee ſhould ſay, thy *end can never bee good*, it cannot bee to doe thy brother good: for then thou wouldeſt doe thy ſelfe good firſt: It is not becauſe thou hateſt ſin;

for

for then thou wouldeſt deteſt thy owne ſinne. It cannot bee our of a *good principle*, or to a *good end*. It is either *becauſe thou art a buſie body* in other mens matters, or thou art *cenſorious*, thou loveſt to be medling; or *becauſe thou hateſt thy brother*, and wouldeſt wreak thy malice on him; thou wouldeſt fain ſhame and diſgrace him, and by beating him downe, get thy ſelfe up; *or thou wouldeſt get a cover to thy owne conſcience*; it muſt be ſome *ſuch* end, it cannot be a good end. Chriſt puts it to a mans conſcience, why hee reproves his brother, when hee is faulty himſelfe.

Thirdly, another Reaſon is, *ſuch a reprover can never doe it in a right manner*, as Chriſt ſaith, *Matth.* 7. 4. *How wilt thou ſay to thy brother, let me pull the moat out of thine eye, when behold a beam is in thine owne eye?* How wilt thou doe it? In what faſhion, or ſort? How wilt thou be able to bring this about? A man that is a *reprover*, had need to have a very cleare ſight of *his owne*, that ſees another mans faults, and will ſet another to rights; he had need to have a *good judgment*, to ſee all the *circumſtances* of reproof, and rebuke, that deals with another. As long as a man hath a beam in his *owne* eye, as long as he hath luſts in his own heart, that will *blind* his *judgment*, and darken and cover his eyes and make him that he ſhall not be able to ſee to goe about it. How canſt thou poſſibly ſay to thy brother, let me pull the moat out of thine eye, when there is a beam in thine own eye?

Reaſon 3 Not in a right manner.

A man that is to *reprove another*, a Master that will reprove his servant, or a father his children, or a Minister that will reprove his people, or a Magistrate that will reprove those that are committed to his charge, or any brother that will reprove another, he must do it with a *spirit of compassion*, with bowels of pity, with a sense and feeling: there is a great deale of wisdome and discretion to be observed in this act. Now when a man hath a beam in his owne eye, how shall he be able to do it? That man that is faulty and guilty himselfe, either he must reprove *too harshly*, and rigorously, or *too sparingly*, or *too insultingly*, hee must do it in a wrong manner, it can never be sincerely and truly done, as long as a man hath a lust in his own heart, and be himselfe is guilty and faulty, that is a reprover of his brother. Nay, the party *reproved*, is holpen to *retort* on him, *How dost thou tell me of pride, and worldlinesse, and covetousnesse? Who so proud and covetous as thou?* Thus a man shall be ready to be hit in the teeth.

Reason 4. It is hypocrisie.

Fourthly, *such a reprover is an hypocrite.* It is no Christian reproof for a man to do so. Wilt thou go and find fault with thy servant for his lazinesse in thy service, when thou art lazie in Gods service? Wilt thou find fault with thy brother for his pride, and thou art full of fashions? Wilt thou condemne the sinnes of the times, and thou livest in some lust? This is nothing but hypocrisie. Thou makest as if thou

didst stand so much for obedience to God; and oh! there is *this* and *that* sin against God, when *thy selfe* is a sinner in *that*, or in *another* kind; this is *hypocrisie*, as Christ saith here, *Thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine owne eye, and then thou shalt see clearly to cast the moat out of thy brothers eye. Thou hypocrite*: Mark, it is an act of *hypocrisie* when a man goes to find fault with *another*, before he has gone to redresse his *owne* soul; to purge his owne conscience, and have shook hands with *the wages of iniquity* his owne selfe, before a man have done *this*, it is hypocrisie to deal with another. For when a man reproves another he takes a form upon himselfe of one that is *zealous* against sin, and an enemy to all sinfull practises: Now what is this but hypocrisie, when a man hath not this in him that he *pretends*? when a man finds fault with anothers pride, as if he were humble forsooth, with anothers worldlinesse, as if he were liberall; when a man doth so, he incurres the *guilt of hypocrisie* in *reproving* another.

Fifthly, another Reason is, *because such a reprover is inexcusable, his reproving of another mans sinne, makes him inexcusable for his owne*, as the Apostle speakes, *Rom.* 2. 1. *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy selfe, for thou dost the same thing.* Marke, thy owne mouth shall condemne thee; thou findest fault with another mans pride: it seemes he is to be condemned for it, then God con-

Reason 5. It makes inexcusable.

condemns thee for thy pride. Thy pride is a faire mark for Gods juſtice, becauſe thou condemneſt another. Doſt thou find fault with anothers hardneſſe of heart, and ill will and backwardneſſe to any thing that is good, and yet thou art backward? Thou expoſeſt thine owne ſoul to the judgement of God; thou haſt taught (as it were) Almighty God how to condemne thee for thy owne luſts and corruptions.

Reaſon 6 tis abſurd.

Again ſixthly, another Reaſon is this, *becauſe ſuch a reprover is an abſurd perſon.* It is abſurd to reprove another, and be faultie ones ſelfe, as it is *Rom.* 2. 21. *Thou that teacheſt another, teacheſt thou not thy ſelfe? Thou that preacheſt another ſhould not ſteal, doſt thou ſteal?* This is a ſtrange abſurd thing, this reproof doth not ſound well in thy mouth: thou ſtealeſt, and forbiddeſt ſtealing; thou preacheſt againſt adultery, and committeſt it; thou ſpeakeſt againſt ſuch and ſuch ſinnes, thou findeſt fault with them in the children of God, and art guilty thy ſelfe, or in thy children or ſervants, or neighbours, and art obnoxious to them in thine owne practiſe: this is an abſurd thing: theſe rebukes and reproofes ſound not well out of thy mouth.

Reaſon 7. It is impudencie.

Laſtly, *it is a ſigne of impudencie, Pſal.* 50. *What haſt thou to doe to take my covenant into thy mouth, when thou hateſt to be reformd, and haſt caſt my covenant behind thy back?* And to the wicked God ſaith, What haſt thou to doe to take my ſtatutes or covenant into thy mouth, ſince thou hateſt inſtruction? What haſt thou to doe to re-

reprove thy brother? If hee be proud, what is that to thee, as long as thou art proud thy selfe? thou goest and flingest stones at him: fling them at thine owne heart first. It is a signe of impudencie.

But it may be objected, *Shall not a wicked magistrate punish sinne, and a wicked Minister preach against the corruptions of the times, and a wicked master rebuke his servants, and a wicked father correct his children? Because he is wicked himselfe, shall hee make himselfe more wicked, and contract more guilt upon his soule?*

I answer, that such a man is in a dilemma; for the man is bound to reprove; in regard of his office, and yet he is bound in conscience to go and amend himselfe first. I say, he is bound to reprove all those that God calls him to reprove, in regard of his *office*: but in regard of *conscience* hee is bound to go and amend his owne fault first. Therefore if it be a Magistrate, such as sit upon life and death, or *Nisi prius*, or any action between man and man, if hee condemn a malefactor, and there remember himselfe guilty, hee is bound in conscience to arise from the Bench, and goe and amend his owne sinne. And wee that are Ministers, when we preach to the people, and remember our selves guilty, let us lay our hands upon our mouthes, at least *in votis*, before ever we have the face to go and find fault with the people, it is necessary it should be so. Therefore, I say, a man is in a *dilemma*, if he doe

not

not reprove ſinne, it is againſt his *office*, and the *perſon* he beares, when God cals him to it; and if he do reprove, then hee ſinnes againſt the *command* of God, that binds him to bee *blameleſſe* that is to beare the place of a *reprover*.

Vſe 1. The Uſe of this is, firſt, to let us ſee, that *a man that reproves* (I ſpeak not of Miniſters only, or of Magiſtrates, or Fathers, but of every man that reproves, either by tongue, in word, or in thought, if he finde fault in this thought with another man for his ſinnes, and his ſtrange doings) *let him take heed he doth but pull a judgement upon his owne head*; he makes himſelfe inexcuſable, as in *Rom.* 2. 3. the Apoſtle there ſpeaking of this very point. *Thinkeſt thou, O man, that judgeſt him that doth thoſe things, and doeſt them, that thou ſhalt eſcape the judgement of God?* A man that judgeth another, and doth the ſame things, that man certainly ſhall not eſcape the judgement of God, as his brother doth not eſcape his judgement.

Vſe 3. To be unblameable ere we reprove. Secondly, another Uſe ſhall be for counſell to every man and woman (for it is every ones caſe, God hath called every one of us to reprove one another, Miniſters to reprove the people, and Magiſtrates to judge between man and man, and every neighbour is to reprove when he is called thereto. Now) let us marke and obſerve this rule; let every one of us labour with all care and conſcience, to be unblameable, unoffenſive, to goe humble our owne ſoules, to cleanſe our own con-

consciences, that we may be able to perform this duty. Beloved, we wrong our own soules, if we find fault with *others*, and suffer *our selves* to bee faulty.

When *Paul* was to preach to the people, knowing that his office of preaching required *reproving*, you see lest he should wrong his own soul, how he laboured to be unblameable, saith he, *I beat my body down, when I preach to others, lest I become a cast-away.*

Again as a man *wrongs* his *owne soule*, so he *dishonours* God. It cannot be unknown what an unthankfull office, the office of a reprover is; the world cannot abide reproof, *The wicked hate the reprover in the gate* Isa. 29. 21. The world is full of scorners, that hate reproofe. *Prov.* 15. 12. Though some men be not so wicked as to hate reproofe, yet at least they think hardly of them that reprove; they think they usurp authority over them, and crow over them, or they undertake to bee their betters; as a reprover undertakes in that thing to bee a mans better. Now when a man is reproved, he is apt to think that his neighbour crowes over him, and exerciseth authority upon him, as if he would grow on him, and be his Iudge. You see *Lot* when he reproved the Sodomites, though as gently as ever he could, *My brethren, doe not so wickedly*, presently for all that they thought hardly of him: *What, will this fellow be a judge that came but the other day to sojurn? Gen.* 19. Presently they thought hardly of him. So we see the Prophet, hee doth but find fault

with *Amaziah* for his fault, and presently the Kings eyes are blinded, and his heart hardened; *Who made you of the King's counsell?* 2 Chron. 25. 15. hee thought him a medler, that pried into State-affaires, and into the Court and Kingdome. A man cannot reprove his brother for his sinne, but it is a thousand to one, if his brother bee not ready presently to pry into him and to look narrowly into his wayes, to espy a hole in his coat if he can, or to make one if he cannot: all mens eyes are upon him, and they look strictly and straitly; and if any thing in the world bee amisse they will be sure to mark it, and to make more of it, to make mountaines of mole-hills. When the blind man did but find fault with the Pharisees and reprove them a little for persecuting of Christ, what say they? *Art thou altogether conceived and born in sinne, and wilt thou teach us?* Joh. 9. 34. Presently they looked on his blindnesse, and birth, Certainly he is a viler sinner then other men, and shall he goe find fault with them? If we mean to reprove *another*, let us labour to be unblameable, to be godly and holy, to reform our *own* wayes, let us be sure to purge our own families, to cleanse our *own* soules, to rid our owne hands of all the wayes of sinne and iniquity, left God be dishonoured. The word of God will be flung in his owne face back againe, and the reproofe if it be never so sweet, and never so wise it will be retorted in a mans own teeth, if hee be not unblameable himselfe. And a man had need to be humble, and lowly, and gentle,

and

and meek, and to put on all bowels and gentlenesse of heart, if he will reprove.

All sinnes are not to be reproved *alike*, some with *sharpnesse*, some with *lenity*. Hee that is a Mountebank that will open a veine for every wheal and pimple. The reprover is like them in *Isaiah*, when they deale with the Cummin and Fetches, a little rod will beat them out, but when they come to the Corne, Wheat and Rie, they beat them out with the Cart-wheele: So when we meet with a hard-hearted spirit, wee must use *stronger* corrosives to them, and gentler admonitions and rebukes towards others that sinne with a lesser and a weaker hand. But this is a thing that a man must be marvellous carefull that reproves. Nay, let a man be unblameable for the present, if he have been faulty before, if it were seven, or ten, or twenty yeares before, if it be knowne, it is a thousand to one, but he shall be hit in the teeth with it when he reproves: you committed adultery, and you did steale at such a time, if it were never so long agoe, Therefore St. *Paul* would not consent to take *Mark* with him in the ministery, *Acts* 15. because he had been offensive to the Church before. We had need be *marvellous carefull* and wary if wee *will reprove*. *Simile*

I had thought to have named other Uses, but I leave this Exposition, and take it as it is passively interpreted.

He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy.

The ſecond expoſition.

THough it may be expounded the other way, yet I rather incline to this. The *Reaſon* is, *Becauſe this is the conſtant current of all Interpreters generally.* I meet but with *one* or *two* that expound it the other way; but *all* paſſively, *He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, &c.*

Secondly, *becauſe the word in the originall* is, *A man of reproofs that hardeneth his own neck.* Now, though it be indifferent whether it be *active* or *paſſive*, yet look in the Scripture, and you ſhall finde it more often *paſſive* then *active*. *A man of reproofs*, that is, a man often reproved, in the *paſſive*. As in *Iſay* 53.3. Chriſt is *a man of ſorrows*, not making others ſorry, but made ſorry paſſively. And ſo in *Dan.* 9. 23. It is ſaid *Daniel* was *a man of deſires*, that is, not a man deſiring other men, or other things, not *actively* deſiring, but *paſſively*, deſired, beloved of God exceedingly. So it is ſaid of *Jeremiah*, *Jerem.* 15. 10. he was *a man of ſtrife*, not a man *ſtriving* with others, but a man *ſtriven with*. So in 1 *King.* 2.26. *A man of death*, that is, not killing others, but to be killed himſelfe. It is taken more frequently in the paſſive ſenſe; ſo we may more boldly take it ſo. *A man of Reproofs*, that is, *reproved againe and againe*, that hath received divers reproofs, and yet *hardeneth his owne neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed,*

destroyed, and that without remedy. Here I might observe by the way, this point of Doctrine, That,

The Lord doth not destroy man willingly.

Doct. The Lord doth not destroy men willingly.

He saith not, A man shall be destroyed without remedy; but a man when he hath sinned against God, when he hath committed sinne, and not onely so, but when he is reproved for his sin, and goeth on. The Lord doth not destroy a man *nakedly*, but upon *consideration* of sin. *Willingly the Lord doth not afflict any*, Lament. 3. Mercy and punishment they flow from God, as the hony and the sting from the Bee; the Bee yeeldeth hony of her own nature, but she doth not sting but when she is provoked: so the Lord is gracious, and good, and favourable, and kind, and blesseth his people from his own nature, but he doth not punish, and plague, and destroy, but being provoked by sin and iniquity. I will not stand to follow this point, I let it go.

God destroyes not but for sin. *Simile.*

The text it self contains the great *mercie* of God in lending a man a reproof.

And what a *great* sin it is, what a great ill it is for a man to sin against his *reproof*. The *greatnesse* of the ill is set down *two* wayes:

First, *by the great sinfulnesse of the thing*, it is called *the hardening of a mans own neck.*

Secondly, *by the greatnesse of the punishment* that God inflicts upon this sin, and that is, he will destroy him, and without remedy.

Observ. A great mercy to be reproved.

For the first, namely, what a great mercie it is for God to let a man be reproved for his sins.

It may bee proved by *many* places of Scripture, onely I find in Scripture it is brought as an *aggravation* of sinne when they sinned against *reproof*, *Hosea* 5. 2. saith hee, *they are profound to commit sinne, though I have been a rebuker of them all.* As if he should say, though I have been so mercifull as to shew them the danger of sinne, to tell them what would come of their wretched courses: though I have called them to *repentance*, and have given them warning what would be the issue of these things; yet for all this, for all my mercy, they have gone on in their sinnes though I have *reproved* them. This *Though* is a word of *aggravation* as we see in the speech of *Daniel* to *Belshazzar*; *Thou, O King, hast not humbled thy selfe though thou knewest this*: as if he had said, though the Lord let thee know the punishment upon thy Father and the plagues of *Nebuchadnezzar* thy grandfather, though the Lord have let thee understand what it is for thee to exalt thy selfe against him; yet thou art not humbled; he *aggravates* his sinne, So, this aggravates a mans sinne when he goes on, notwithstanding he is reproved. The *reasons* are,

Reason. 1. Reproofes come from love.

First, *because when God reproves a man of sinne: the reproof primarily comes out of love*; therefore when he reproved *Laodicea*, and told her she was luke-warm, and said, *I would thou were either hot or cold.* And since she was neither, he would spue her out of his mouth; he tells her whence the reproof flowed; because *I love I reprove*: *As many as I love, I rebuke*, Rev. 3. 19. It is

not

not out of ill will that I tell thee of thy lukewarmneſſe, and threaten to ſpue thee out of my mouth; I tell thee theſe things that thou mayſt avoid that ill. I ſay, Gods reproſes flow primarily from *love* to men, whereby he would have them lay aſide their wretched courſes, and avoid the judgements. Nay, it is an argument of *hatred* when a man doth *not reprove* his brother of ſinne. If God let a man goe on in ſinne, and never tell him of his drunkenneſſe, nor never find fault with his pride and ſecurity, never convince him, or wound, or touch him, nor deal with him about his unſetled eſtate, and his rotten condition, it is a ſigne God hates the man: but when God reproves a man from day to day, Man, thou art a proud creature, thou ſhalt to hell for thy pride, and hypocriſie, and ſecuritie, and harpneſſe of heart: When the Lord reproves a man from day to day, this is an argument of *love*; the other is an effect of *hatred*, not to reprove. *Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother in thy heart*, ſaith *Moſes*, *but ſhalt in any wiſe reprove him, and not ſuffer ſinne to be upon him*, Levit. 19. 17. Thou hateſt thy brother when thou ſeeſt him ſinne, and doeſt not warn him, and knoweſt he is guilty of ſinfull courſes, and doeſt not reprove him; and when thou haſt time, and place, and opportunity, and fit circumſtances to reprove, and yet thou wilt not doe it. it is a ſigne thou hateſt thy brother; it is the greateſt degree of hatred one of them. If a man deny food for the body, and let a man rather die of hunger, then hee will give

him meat, or let a man fall into a pit, rather then he will prevent the miſcheif, a man is guilty of *bodily* murther; but thou art guilty of the *ſoule* of thy brother, if thou let him fall into ſin. Thou thinkeſt thy brother is harſh, he will not bear with thee, he is haſty and teſty: no, thou art in an error, *That man that hates reproof, erreth*, ſaith *Solomon*. Indeed a man ſhould not be too ſharp, but firſt tell his brother in private that he is in an error: for *reproof* is a means of *grace*, it flowes from great love, it is the providence of God that hath caſt it about, that thou ſhouldeſt have reproof given thee; if thou have a heart to take it, it is an argument of love.

Prov. 10. 17.

Reaſon. 2 They tend to good.

Another reaſon is taken from the primary end of reproof, which is to bring a man to good, to reduce him into a right way, to convert a man, to ſave his ſoule, that is the *primary* end of reproof and admonition: therefore to go on in ſinnes contrary to it, muſt needs be a great evill. As *Soloman* brings in the wiſdome of the Father, Jeſus Chriſt, calling upon people, *O yee fooles, how long will yee love folly? turn at my reproof.* Mark what followes, to what end; *I will poure my ſpirit on you.* There is the end he tells them. *O yee fooles*, wretched people without underſtanding, that go on in ſinne, and harden your owne hearts, that repent not, nor turne not to God, that will not ſubmit to his wiſdome, nor imbrace his word: *yee fooles*, that wrong your own ſouls, *ob turne at my reproof.* Why? This is the reaſon that God reproves a man on this faſhion, it is

that

that a man may have the Spirit of God granted him. If thou have an eare to *heare* reproof, and a heart to *drink* it in, and to weare it as a crown of gold on thy head, and as a chain about thy neck, thou shouldest have the Spirit of God for thy labour: the Lord reproves thee that thou mightest return back, and have his Spirit, and have mercie and forgivenesse. This is all the ill will that Gods Ministers beare thee, and all the hatred that reprovers shew, when they tell thee of thy sinnes whatsoever they be, that they may stop thy steps from going downe to Hell.

When the Lord sends thee Sermon upon Sermon, Preacher after Preacher, thou art called on day by day, (as you here in this place) This is the infinite goodnesse of God toward your souls; therefore your sinne is infinite great, if you do not amend, as the wise man saith, *He that hates reproof shall surely die, Prov.* 15. 10. there is no remedy for that man, that man that puts off repentance, God reproves him from day to day, on the Sabbath day, and on the week dayes; hee goes to this man, and there he is reproved; and to another, and there he is reproved; and yet he goes on in this deadnesse and *formality* in the ordinances of God, that man shall surely die, there is no remedy, he sins against the infinite mercie of God.

Thirdly, *there is no reason in the world why reproofe should be taked otherwise then with all willingnesse, and thankfulnesse, and chearfulnesse.*

Reason. 3 It is brutish to reprove then

fulneſſe. If a man have but the *reaſon* of a *man* in him, he muſt needs take *reproof* in good part; he muſt be a beaſt that doth not judge well of him that reproves him. There is an excellent place, *Prov.* 12. 1. *He that puts off reproof is brutiſh*; he that hates *reproof*, is a brute, that man hath no reaſon in him. Art thou a ſwearer, and art reproved for it? thy brother tells thee thou wilt be damned for it. Doeſt thou chafe at that man? thou art a beaſt, thou haſt no more underſtanding then an Ox or an Aſſe. *Simile* As it is with a horſe when the Oſtler comes to rub him, he kicks with the heel; when he only beats off the dirt, he lifts up his hinder legge on him, and it may be wounds him: ſo thou haſt no more underſtanding then a beaſt that finds fault with one that reproves thee for thy ſins. So that whatſoever thy ſin be, he that tells thee of it, there is no reaſon in the world but he ſhould be a dear man to thee. Me thinks of all men under heaven, godly Miniſters that are faithfull in their place and calling, ſhould be the deareſt men to you upon the face of the earth. Why? becauſe they reprove you, and tell you of your ſins, and what will become of your ſouls, what will be the iſſue and Cataſtrophe of all your wayes. You that come to Church every day, may read a Lecture in the Word of God, what will be your doom at the laſt day: you are told of your pride, and adultery, of your whoredome and oaths, carnall Goſpellers of their ſecure and carnall condition, and common profeſſors of their formality, and other

lufts/

lusts that men are given to; you are told of all: I say, the feet of Gods messengers should be beautifull; you should hug the messengers, and put their reproofs in your bosomes, and let them have power and efficacie on your souls; and go and put them in practice.

The Use of this is,

Use 1. The misery to want reprovers

First, is it so, that it is the infinite mercie of God to reprove men of their sinnes, to tell them of whatsoever is amisse in their hearts and lives? let me tell you, First, *see here what an infinite punishment God is bringing upon that Kingdome when hee is taking away reprovers from them*: when God takes away reprovers, he takes away all mercie and loving kindnesse. Therefore God when he threatned to deliver up *Judah*, to curse that Kingdome, to plague them for their rebellion, and utterly to give them over, he saith he will take away the reprover; saith hee to the Prophet, *Thou shalt be dumb, and not open thy mouth, thou shalt not be a reprover to this people*, Ezek. 3.26. When the Lord would curse that people, and bind them over to a reprobate sense, and deliver them to wrath, the Prophet shall not be a *reprover*, he silences the Prophet. Or as *Piscator* thinks, the * anger of God *silenced* him, or confined him to his house; that he should not prophesie. So when God silences his Ministers, that he takes them from a place, or threatens to take them away, it is a signe of heavie vengeance toward such a people. It may be wicked people laughed at them, and made it a matter

* or Angel

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ter of nothing, they were glad that *Ezekiels* mouth was gagged, and it were no matter if the countrey were rid of a company of Puritans; though they had no such word then, they had as bad, they think all is well: but the time will come that they will curse the day that ever they provoked God to take away their Ministers; we enjoy them by the mercie of God, other places have lost them, God knows how soon wee may lose ours. In *Hosea* 4. 4. the Lord there when he would set out the *desperate* estate of the children of *Ephraim*, he delivers them up to such a state and condition, that none should reprove them, *Let none reprove another.* If they will sinne let them; if they will go on in idolatry, let them; if they will harden their own hearts, let them; if they will *die* in sinne, *let them*; if they will perish, and be damned for ever, let them. *Let no man reprove another.* It is a lamentable state.

Generally people are glad when the Land is swept of all the good Ministers, and the good servants of God: they had rather heare a fine song in a Pulpit, of one that preacheth morally, or it may be preacheth his own selfe, or the like, but the time will come, when they shall say as *Salomon* saith, *It is better to heare the reproofe of the wise, then the song of fooles, Eccles.* 7. 5. People love alise to hear the song of fooles. When a foole comes up and preacheth, *At what time soever a sinner shall repent of his sinne*: And, *Bee not just over much*; and what need such adoe? Here is more puther then needs, and abuse places, and wrest

wrest Scriptures. As for example, *the thiefe* on the Crosse was saved at the last with a word or two; and they bring the example of the *Publican*, that cried, *God be mercifull to me a sinner*, and went justified to his house rather then the Pharisee that made *long* prayers. And tush, what need men be so *zealous*, and precise, and puritanicall, *Whosoever calls upon the name of God, shall be saved*: people love alife such songs of fooles: but the time shall come when peoples eyes shall be opened, and their consciences awakened, and then they will wish, O that we had heard the reproose of the wise.

Vse 2.

The second use makes against those that despise the reproose of the wise, yee despise not men, but God; yee have despised me, Prov. 1.30. You think you despise a poore Minister, he is strict, & harsh with your souls, and presseth these things upon your conscience, and it may bee, more then he hath warrant to doe: so you think you do not despise God, but one onely Minister: Nay, saith Christ, *you have despised my reproose.* When you despise them that Christ sends, you despise him. This is an *expresse* and an explicite signe of a mans everlasting *destruction, when he despiseth reproose* as in that speech of the Prophet to *Amaziah, I know that the Lord hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast not hearkened to my reproose*, 2 *Chron.* 25.16. So I may say, I know that God hath determined to destroy a Nation, a Citie, or a people, when they will not take counsell of Gods Messengers, when they will not hearken

Against despisers of reproof

hearken to inſtruction: They have beene called upon, nationall ſinnes have been ripped up, parochiall ſinnes have beene ſpoken of, yet when they are told, they will not be reproved. We that are the Miniſters of God, know that God will deſtroy as many as turn not at reproof. I let this paſſe.

I ſhould now ſhow the *grievouſneſſe* of this ill of ſtanding out againſt *reproof*: It is expreſſed two wayes:

The grievouſneſſe of ſtanding out againſt reproof.

Firſt, in the *ſinfulneſſe* of it, *to harden a mans heart.*

Secondly, in the *puniſhment*, *He ſhall be deſtroyed without remedy.* And in the *deſtruction* you may ſee here,

Firſt, *the unexpectedneſſe* of it, *He ſhall be deſtroyed ſuddenly.*

Secondly, *the totalneſſe* of it, *He ſhall bee deſtroyed.* The word ſignifieth to ſhatter all in peeces.

Thirdly, *the irrecoverableneſſe* of it, *without remedy.*

Fourthly, *the ſutableneſſe* of it, his puniſhment is according to his ſin. Mark, as he hardened his own heart againſt God, ſo God will harden his heart againſt him: as no remedy would turn him from his ſin, ſo no remedy ſhall turn God from his wrath: As his ſin was in hardening his heart like a ſtone, ſo God ſhall deale with him as a ſtone is deale with, he ſhall deſtroy him. The word in the *originall* ſignifies *broken to peeces as a ſtone is broken*, that is, the Lord will deale with him juſt

in

in his own kind. Hence I might observe this doctrine, that

Doct. God proportions punishments to sins.

The Lord proportions punishments to mens sin. Just as a mans sin is, so is the punishment. *David* sinned in numbring the people, 2 *Sam.* 24. 15. and God punished him in that, *Pharaoh* sinned in destroying and drowning the males of the Israelites, God smote his first-born: He drowned their babes, and he himself was drowned in the sea. I might bring abundance of examples.

Now the *Reasons* of this are,

Reason. 1 To shew the eqvity of the punishment.

First, *because hereby a mans punishment appears to be so much the more equall, and worthy.* Retaliation is a most equall punishment to the sin; there is no inequality in it but this, that it is too mercifull, *An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, burn for burn, wound for wound.* You know an eye is equall for an eye: so when God punisheth a man just in his own kind, *quid* for *quo*, that as there was no remedy would turn him from his sin, so there shall be no remedy shall turn God from his wrath. Herein Gods punishment appeares to bee most equall, *Revel.* 16. 5. 6. *Thou art righteous, O Lord, in that thou judgest thus: for shee hath shed the blood of thy Saints, therefore thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.* Thou thirstedst after blood, there it is for thee: so this is most equall, when men have dealt thus and thus with God, when God shall deal so and so with thee, thou canst not find fault. When a man drinks as he brews, and reaps as he sowes, and finds as he brings, what inequality

lity is here? *It shall come to passe, that as when I called they would not hear, so when they call, I will not answer*, Zech. 7. When God calls upon thee, and thou wilt not hear, afterwards when thou callest for mercie, if he do not hear thee, it is just.

Reason 2. It stops a mans mouth.

Secondly, another reason is, *because this stops a mans mouth, it convinceth a mans conscience*; when a mans conscience finds that he is served in his own kind, that he is paid in his own coin, it stops his mouth. As *Adonibezek* he had cut off the thumbs and toes of 70. Kings: afterwards hee was served just so as he had dealt with others; he had cut off their thumbs and toes, and made them gather orts under his table; so afterwards his thumbs and toes were cut off. Now mark what his conscience saith, *Judg.* 1.7. *As I have dealt, so God hath dealt with me.* As if he had said, God knowes wherefore the children of *Judah* have done this: they know not why they cut off my thumbs, and the reason why they cut off my toes; God knowes what they looked at in punishing me thus: but Gods just providence hath dealt thus with me; in this kind I served others. This is so palpable a punishment, so equall and just, that though the sin were committed twenty yeeres ago, yet a mans conscience will find out his sin twenty yeeres after. As *Iosephs* brethren they sold him, and after cast him into a pit, two and twenty yeeres after, when *Joseph* was harsh with them, see what their conscience saith; *Doubtlesse we are guilty of our brothers bloud, when we*

we saw the anguish of his soule, and he besought us, and we would not heare. As if they had said; What is the matter why the man is thus harsh? he never saw us before, why should he be so harsh, and we be strangers? Nay, saith conscience, you are well served, remember you were harsh to your brother; if you dealt so with him, marvel not if you be dealt so with. And after, when they came to their Inne, and found their mony, they wondred, *What is this that God hath done?* Their conscience, I warrant you, hit them in the teeth: without doubt they thought the mony that they took for selling of their brother, had humbled them as a Ghost: did not wee pay the man mony for his corne that we bought? Nay, saith conscience, you are rightly served, here is the money you sold your brother for, (though it were not so) without doubt conscience upbraided them. Naturally wee are apt to find fault with Gods judgements and quarrel, but when conscience sees the equity of them, we have nothing to say.

Thirdly, all the standers by may see the equity of it, when the punishment is according to the sinne: Nay, Divinity makes this argument, that there is a God to judge the earth, because men are punished in their owne kinde. I will shew you one example of *Abimilech*, that wretch, that slew seventy of his brethren upon one stone, *Judg.* 9. 7. afterwards when he came to stand under the tower of *Abel*, a woman flung a peice of a milstone upon his head, and killed him;

This was ſtrange all the ſtanders by might ſay, that *Abimilech* ſhould be killed with a ſtone: no queſtion the woman thought nothing, ſhe flung the ſtone becauſe ſhe had nothing elſe to fling; it was ſtrange that it ſhould hit him ſo pat, it might have hit another as well as him; the ſtone might have fallen to the ground as well as on him; and that it ſhould be by a woman, and a milſtone too: Milſtones are not uſed on the top of a Tower, and a milſtone broken that a woman could lift it, and that he ſhould be killed by a milſtone, and not with a ſword; nay, might all the ſtanders by ſay, This God hath done, he was the ſonne of a ſtrange woman, and a woman hath killed him; he killed his brethren upon one ſtone, and now a ſtone hath killed him; all the world might be able to ſay; This God hath done.

The uſe of this is,

Firſt, let no creature in the world complaine of Gods dealing, if he puniſh us according to our kind; he that *kils with the ſword, ſhall bee killed with the ſword. He that ſtops his eares from hearing the poore*, what ſhall his puniſhment be? *He ſhall cry and not be heard. He that ſhewes no mercy*, how ſhall he be puniſhed? *He ſhall receive no mercie* Iames 2. 13. *Woe to thee that ſpoyledſt, and waſt not ſpoiled: when thou ceaſeſt ſpoyling, others ſhall ſpoyle thee*, Iſai. 33. 1. *Iudge not*, (ſaith Chriſt;) what if I doe? *Then thou ſhalt be judged.* Thus God recompenceth the fruit of a mans doing. Here is no *Momus* can complain;

no

no *Aristarchus*, that can find fault with the justice and judgement of God.

Secondly, *it is not amisse to consider and see how God proportions punishments to* [illegible].

In { *Kind*, *Quantity*, *Quality*, *Time*, *Place*, and other circumstances.

In *kind*: *He shall eate the fruit of his owne wayes*, that is, he shall be punished in kind. It is a similitude from a tree, every tree brings forth according to its owne kind; if it be an Apple-tree, it brings forth Apples; if a Crab-tree, Crabs, a Pear-tree, Pears: So every sinner shall be punished in their kind, a Minister shall be punished in his kind, wicked Masters in their kind, servants in theirs, rich in theirs, poore in theirs: if a man be a drunkard, hee shall bee punished in one kind; if he be an adulterer, in another: *Every man shall eate the fruit of his own wayes.* Every sinne brings an homogeniall punishment, according to the nature of it, I cannot stand to follow this, though it be very clear in Scripture.

Secondly, it is in *Quantity*; God proportions the *punishment* according to the *sinne*; he that *sowes sparingly*, *shall reap sparingly*; but he that *sowes bountifully*, *shall reap bountifully*. *Little* sinnes, *little* punishments; and *great* sinnes *great*

punishments. There are little sins, moat sins, great sins, and there are Camel sins: so there are little and great punishments, some meet with many, some with fewer stripes. Just according to a mans sinnes, so the Lord shapes out the punishment, for great sinners, great plagues, and for every one according to his own measure. God hath a pair of Ballance that he means to weigh men in: As he weighed *Belshazzar*, so hee will weigh thee, and look how much sinne thou putteſt in one scale, so much punishment God will put in the other; he will not abate thee one oath, not one idle thought, not one breach of the Sabbath, not one neglect of hearing the Word, or of other duties: the Lord will put wrath in one ballance, as thou putteſt sinne in the other; he will make the scales even to a haire: as he dealt with *Belshazzar*, *He will lay righteousneſſe to the line*, and judgement to the plummet, and weigh thee out in the scales, and thou shalt have just according to thy sins.

As the Lord deales with his own people, he will not abate so much as a cup of cold water, but it shall be rewarded: he will reward all, from the greateſt to the least; so he will deale with the wicked, there shall no sin paſſe unpunished.

Againe, there is a proportion in the *Quality*. If *Adam* sin in eating, he shall be punished in eating; If the women of *Judah* sin in apparel, they shall be punished in apparel, *Isay* 3.24. In *Wisd.* 11.16. *a man shall be punished in that that he sinnes in*; if *Absolom* sin in his haire, he shall be punish-

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ed in it; *Nebuchadnezzar* might finde his ſin in his brutiſh condition, and the Prodigall might find his ſin in the Hog-trough: So if thou finde thy ſelfe in want, conſider if thou haſt not waſted thy meanes, if thou haſt not beene vaine in building, and prodigall in ſpending, or gaming, or unneceſſary bounty, and immoderate liberality, beyond thy means: Art thou puniſhed in thy Trade, or Children, &c. ſee if thou haſt not ſinned in them; for where there is ſin, God will proportion the puniſhment to the ſin.

Fourthly, God proportions the puniſhment to the ſin in regard of the time. The ſame houre that *Belſhazzar* was drinking and quaffing in the Temple, the ſame houre the hand of God was upon him; if it be not upon thee the ſame houre, it may be to morrow at the ſame houre. It may be thou haſt ſinned this day at ſuch an houre, it may be God may ſtrike thee to morrow at the ſame time, or this day ſeven-night, it may be the next year. *Nebuchadnezzar* was warned of his pride this yeare, and the ſame time twelvemonth the Lord *drove him from among men.* So in *Acts* 13. 42. one Sabbath day the Iewes heard *Paul* preach and went out before the Sermon was quite done they were not able to ſtand to the bleſſing; the ſame day ſeven-night the Lord made the Apoſtles ſhake off the duſt of their feet againſt them, and leave them to a reprobate ſenſe.

Fifthly, the Lord proportions his puniſhments to the place. It is ſtrange many times, that the drunkard ſhould get his death in the ſame Alehouſe

house where he got his liquor. In *Judg* 7. in that story of *Oreb* and *Zeeb*, *Oreb* at the rock *Oreb*, devised against the children of Israel, and upon the same rock he was killed, And *Zeeb* another persecuter of the children of God; so the Psalmist calls them, be at the Wine-presse of *Zeeb*, took victuals from the children of Israel, and in the same place his own life was taken away.

Just as Judges and Magistrates at this day, they hang up men where they have done the villany. As they doe with *Dogs* and Cats, they carry them to the place, to the Cellar or the Buttery where they do the mischeif. But the beasts themselves, though they have no reason, are able to pick out the meaning of it. The Lord punisheth sinners in the same place. Here where thou hast been deaf to hear the word of God, when thy heart riseth against the Preacher, in the same place (it may be) the Lord will deliver thee up to a reprobate sense. In the same place, at the Lords Table, where thou comest unworthily, thou shalt eate and drink thine own damnation.

FINIS.

Poſcript.

THe ſame Author hath another Book in the Preſſe entituled,

The Sacrifice of the Faithfull:

OR,

A Treatiſe ſhewing the nature, property, and efficacy of zealous Prayer, Together with ſome Motives to Prayer, and helps againſt diſcouragements in Prayer.

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